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Counteractions: Resisting and Embracing Globalization in Contemporary Public Art

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COUNTERACTIONS: RESISTING AND EMBRACING GLOBALIZATION IN CONTEMPORARY PUBLIC ART

by

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Thesis directed by Assistant Professor Kira van Lil

New forms of identity have emerged in the twenty-first century in response to globalization, and community formation has transformed alongside of this phenomenon. New technologies paired with voluntary and involuntary mass migrations have created the opportunity for people to define themselves in new, multi-dimensional, and dynamic ways, no longer solely based on the confines of the nation-state. While continuing to battle the global political, social, and economic structure set in place by the colonial past, post-colonial thinkers have added a new dimension to their scholarship by theorizing how the increased movement of people and information has created a shift in both identity politics and in the area of center and periphery studies. While many scholars have focused their attention on how this shift in identity politics has impacted topics in contemporary art, few art historians have addressed how this shift has transformed the meaning, purpose, content, and effects of public art. This thesis will address this void in scholarship by examining the diverse impact of the changing meaning of identity on contemporary public art using multiple case studies of community-building public art projects commissioned internationally. Looking specifically to public projects that instigate dialogue via technology, the land, and the confrontation of public space, I contend that public artists working today are able to counteract the detrimental forces of globalization by embracing the potential benefits of this phenomenon.

Contents:

Introduction: Globalization as the New Post-Colonial Paradox

I. The Death of Diversity?

The celebration is over. '*Multiculturalism is dead'*.[1] At least this is how multiple political leaders in Europe have responded to the problems caused by the constant influx of guest workers and immigrants to their countries. The arrival of non-Westerners and their subsequent formation of a large and visible presence in cities such as London, Paris, and Berlin intimidate those that see this non-native population as threatening to a unified national identity and has challenged the success of the post-colonial project that ultimately hoped for a global cultural democracy. Germany's Angela Merkel, Britain's David Cameron, and France's Nicolas Sarkozy have all expressed their agreement on the failure of multiculturalism, echoing Madeleine Bunting of the *Guardian* who writes, "Behind Cameron's speech...is a nostalgia for a strong national collective identity, and a sense of shared values. But after a generation of individualism and globalization, all kinds of collective identities have been weakened or abandoned."[2] This disturbing outcry from Europe has raised the question as to whether the rise of multiculturalism in the past thirty years has threatened national unity and identity alongside the larger question: what is the mechanism driving this movement away from multiculturalism? In an attempt to make sense of the conundrum brought on by globalization, this thesis will look at public art as a lens for exploring the effects of globalization on identity, locality, community-building, and public space in the twenty-first century.

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[1] "Germany's Angela Merkel: Multiculturalism has 'utterly failed'," *The Christian Science Monitor,* 17 Oct. 2010, http://www.csmonitor.com/World/Global-News/2010/1017/Germany-s-Angela-Merkel-Multiculturalism-has-utterly-failed (accessed 11 Mar. 2011).

[2] Madeliene Bunting, "Blame consumer capitalism, not multiculturalism," *Guardian,* 6 Feb. 2011, http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2011/feb/06/capitalism-multiculturalism-cameron-flawed-analysis (accessed 2 Feb. 2011).

Globalization has encouraged and increased the migration of people and information (locative devices, archives, publications, etc.) through improved technological and communicative networks and the loosening of national borders. The relaxation of borders and the (in)voluntary migration caused by political, social, and economic crises has led to a re-mapping of the globe. Nationality is confused by the influx of non-nationals. Movements, re-settlements, and cultural exchanges allow for people to identify with multiple entities be they virtual, transnational, and/or global. The unfixed nature of identity has been described by Stuart Hall who writes of identity as "a production that is never complete, always in process, and always constituted within, not outside, representation."[3]

This notion of identity as a process, a choice, and a continual transformation has excited artists working within the gallery and in the public realm to create beyond the constraints of geographic constituencies. As people uproot, identity seemingly becomes less reliant on past location and instead re-rooted in a context concerning the *now*. French theorist and curator Nicolas Bourriaud's concept of *altermodernity* addresses this new context:

> What I am calling altermodernity thus designates a construction plan that would allow new intercultural connections, the construction of a space of negotiation going beyond post-modern multiculturalism, which is attached to the origin of discourses and forms rather than to their dynamics. It is a matter of replacing the question of origin with that of destination. Where should we go?" That is the modern question par excellence.[4]

By the end of the twentieth century, post-colonial critics closed the doors on the celebration of multiculturalism as it inherently tried to escape the inevitable confines of colonial power structures, and it has only been very recently that scholars have acknowledged globalization as

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[3] Stuart Hall, "Cultural Identity and Diaspora," in *Identity: Community, Culture, and Difference,* ed. Jonathan Rutherford (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1990), 222.
[4] Nicholas Bourriand, ed. *Altermodern: Tate Triennial* (London: Tate Britain Publishing, 2009), 40.

the new imperialism.[5] The spread of capitalism has created the twenty-first century's new inescapable paradox, but rather than continuing to deny the consequences of the new exploitative phenomenon, scholars have found ways to counteract the system by acknowledging their position within it.

Nation-state, transnational, ethnic, diaspora, global, glocal, local, culture, race, multicultural, center, multi-centered, periphery, mainstream, thirdspace, hybrid, community, exile, refugee, immigrant, guest-worker, displacement...these terms are among the constantly growing list referenced today to describe people, places, identities, and more prosaically, the state of the world right now. These words have been used so repetitively and interchangeably that their meanings have become hollow references to the post-colonial era. What do the coexistence of all of these descriptions and phenomena mean for the world today?

Globalization has become a vogue term to describe the rise in technology, mobility, and connectivity. However, getting caught in the excitement of globalization, we oftentimes forget to think of the consequences this phenomenon brings with it. The homogenization of personal identities, cultures, and communities into one global culture defined by capitalist consumerism, the environmental devastation through urban development and overpopulation, and the global fragmentation and displacement of people from places fraught with war-torn conflict are among the many consequences of globalization we celebrate in first-world cities. While global interaction has unhinged identity from the limiting constructs of nation, culture, ethnicity, or individual identity, the continued control of capitalist forces over what I will discuss later as public spaces, creates a balancing and counteracting effect. The result of globalization has effectively allowed for a platform of global dialogue and transnational interactions, and with

[5] See Geeta Kapur "Globalisation and Culture." *Third Text* 39, (1997), 21-38.

more freedom awarded to the individual, the proliferation of a global culture has initiated a global language of consumerism. Contemporary theorist Geeta Kapur writes:

> The terminology of globalism[6] refers unblushingly to an ideology of the market, dictated by the IMF, the World Bank and the G-7 executive, crowned by GATT; to a global market of which the United States, having 'won' the cold war, is the moral conductor. It sets the norm not only for free trade by also (in the same universalizing mode) for human rights, for historical and cultural studies. What is being globalised is therefore American style capitalism and its implicit worldview.[7]

The interpenetration of power structures in which capitalistic powers replace the hegemonic structures of the nation state within economic, political, and social practices has worked to both negate and *reinforce* the boundary between the center, or institution-dominated world and the periphery, the world that runs in subservience to the center. The distinction between capitalist, global cultures and those considered third world is only growing more distinct. The local and the global are posed against one another. And of course, the dominating post-colonial question has not been answered: How can we blur the distinction between the self and other, the center and periphery, and perhaps more importantly, should we try?

The transmittance of a global culture assumes that access to the altermodern, globalized world is democratic. Peoples and cultures previously unheard and unseen are now emerging within the dominant institutions. In the art world, museums, international exhibitions, and galleries are now acquiring and promoting art and artists from places previously rendered exotic, primitive, or 'uncultured'. The explosive appearance of art from Asia, Africa, Australia, and

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[6] It is important to note here differences between the terms globalism and globalization. Joseph Nye, former dean of Harvard's Kennedy School of Government, explains the distinction writing, "Globalism, at its core, seeks to describe and explain nothing more than a world which is characterized by networks of connections that span multi-continental distances...In contrast, globalization refers to the increase or decline in the degree of globalism. It focuses on the forces, the dynamism or speed of these changes." Joseph Nye, "Globalism versus Globalization," *The Globalist* 15 (2002), http://www.theglobalist.com/StoryId.aspx?StoryId=2392 (accessed March 26, 2011). This thesis refers more specifically to the mechanisms behind globalism, and will therefore use 'globalization' much more frequently.

[7] Kapur, 21.

Latin America has culminated in what many contemporary theorists refer to as a manifestation of the global culture. Yet whether these inclusions are the result of a spreading capitalist endeavor that essentializes and homogenizes is still in question. Lucy Lippard's words ring true almost twenty years after publication: "The global art world is only theoretically decentered; intentions and "discourse" are far ahead of esthetic realization. Cultural positions are relevant if the place itself has some substance-an identity, a history of use or of some identified absence."[8] Capital imperialism, therefore, is reinforced through the disguises of transnationalism, multiculturalism, and globalism. Coline Milliard calls attention to the numerous issues the term 'altermodern' raises-including the crucial question of access to this privileged global mobility-that, in the critic's words, "seem to have been swept under the carpet in order to indulge in the sexiness of this new phrase."[9]

While we might like to believe that the age of technology and communication has found a way to defy national boundaries into one utopian global culture, the exploration of the reality of globalization's consequences surrounds the lack of infrastructure to handle these changes. Transnationalism, in many cases, is a politically unwelcome result of the world we live in today. The constant movement of people has reinforced national borders, cultural, racial, and ethnic distinctions, and essentially, the border between center and periphery. The utopic borderless cultural democracy cannot be attained because global democracy remains a far-fetched feasibility. This is not to say that scholars and artists should not continue to aspire towards this ideal. Indeed the mere discussion, attempt, and concern over reaching this free-flowing organism of identity is perhaps the most crucial step in heading towards the goal.

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[8] Lucy Lippard, *Lure of Local* (New York: New Press, 1997), 277.
[9] Coline Milliard, "A Trans-National Triennial?" *Artnet*, http://www.artnet.com/magazineus/reviews/milliard/milliard2-12-09.asp (accessed 15 Feb. 2011).

II. Methodology: Public Art as a Lens

This thesis will use contemporary public art as a lens for examining the simultaneous embrace and counteraction of globalization on themes of identity and community. The convoluted conception of what public space is provides a complex platform to discuss concepts such as democracy, community, and citizenship in constantly changing urban spaces. Looking specifically to community-building public art projects and new methods public artists utilize to approach the transformative nature of identity, this project will explore how public art responds to the global phenomenon and how this phenomenon simultaneously facilitates community-building practices that reassert the significance of individual, collective, local identities.

Public art is uniquely or perhaps ideally suited to defy the confines of the post-colonial paradox. Placed outside the confines of the museum or gallery, able to instigate, unify, and distinguish very real and sustainable communities, and better positioned for a democratic approach (or is it?), certain public art forms now have the potential to come closer to reaching a global audience, establishing a transnational/global culture, and providing egalitarian platforms for exchange. Although Rosalyn Deutsche's 1996 publication, *Evictions: Art and Spatial Politics*, ultimately contends that a completely democratic public space is an enigma, the possibility for coming closer to democracy relies on the uncertainty and openness of public space.[10] While public space cannot defy the authority of corporate powers that now control most of our public spaces, the inevitable amount of tension occurring as a result of the clashing of public and private interests, central and peripheral cultures, and global and local forces is unique to the antagonistic nature of public space.[11]

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[10] See Rosalyn Deutsche, *Evictions: Art and Spatial Politics* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1996), especially subchapter "Agoraphobia," 269-328.

[11] Antagonism will be elaborated more fully in Chapter 4.

Community-building projects, already complicated by their presence in public spaces, provide a lens into exploring resistance to globalizing forces. The transformative nature of identity has changed the way public artists provide platforms for collective identity formation. The first chapter of this thesis provides an exploration of identity politics throughout the postmodern period with a brief introduction to community-based public art. After establishing a definition of public art and relating its significance to contemporary society, I will provide an argument that promotes the study of public art as a microcosm for the complex effects of political, social, and economic changes throughout the world. This chapter will also briefly explore a variety of public art projects that range from more traditional mural media as a form of activist art to new genre[12] projects that take multidisciplinary approaches to exploring community and identity. This chapter will ultimately situate public art in dialogue with post-colonial critiques, a subject of scholarship that will be evoked throughout the larger discussion.

The second chapter explores public art projects that utilize new media[13] to instigate intercultural and transnational communities. While globalization has increased the ease and accessibility in utilizing technology to connect to distant people and places, the widening audience has made it more difficult for transnational communities to become lasting and sustainable. Looking to new media projects such as the Media Facade Festivals and multiple works from Raphael Lozano-Hemmer, I will critically approach the meaning and function of technology dependent displays primarily funded by global corporations. Lacking meaning as their goal is to advertise rather than activate and creating instantaneous audiences but no real sustained community, they are a response to the fleeting nature of today's society and the result of increased corporate and institution-based funding in public art. Twenty-first century public art

[12] See Suzanne Lacy, ed., *Mapping the Terrain: New Genre Public Art* (Seattle: Bay Press, 1995).
[13] New media refers to the utilization of the Internet and other digital technologies to create interactive works.

runs the risk of disconnection from the viewing public as many new media projects fail to instigate any social transformation, and public art becomes a commodity and a capitalistic endeavor. Looking also to projects that utilize an online platform to instigate communities that expand to real (physical) space, I will explore the relationship between virtual and physical communities and how projects anchored in both spaces in many instances prove more effective than solely online platforms. The dangers of technology in limiting the expression of democracy will also be investigated through the critical evaluation of the *Olympia-Rafah Solidarity Mural Project.* Perhaps the most significant theme that will be illuminated in chapter two and will continue throughout the thesis is that public artists have found ways to utilize the positive effects of globalization, i.e. computer software, increased access and web platforms, to combat the negative effects, i.e. environmental, war, displacement, and economic fragmentation.

The third chapter investigates the expansion and universalization of local meanings to address global concerns. The imposition of the global has made local communities and identities vulnerable in its wake, but public artists use public projects to counteract and reinforce local identities and the importance of local practices. I will first look at public art practices in relation to Joseph Beuys' work that advocates the role of social sculpture in creating democratic communities. Emphasizing radical ecology to offset the effects of consumerism, social sculpture incorporates the interaction of all community members as potential artists.[14] This chapter will also evaluate the role of transnational public art projects meant to encourage urban regeneration, renewal, and environmental sustainability. I look to the writings of Lucy Lippard, Hal Foster, and Miwon Kwon to consider how the local and global interact in terms of public art making and commissioning. Focusing on the *Wild Rice Project*, developed in Minnesota, I investigate the

[14] Radical ecology and Joseph Beuys' work will be discussed more fully in chapter three. Also see David Adams, "Joseph Beuys: Pioneer of a Radical Ecology," *Art Journal* 51 (1992), 26-34.

contentious nature of communities and the continued significance of identity and its relation to the land. As public art becomes a means to illuminate the possibility for communities to form based on a public in disagreement rather working towards the same vision for environmental reform, the continued motif of public art resisting the ecologically harmful consequences of globalization helps to deconstruct the homogenizing power structure from within the system.

The fourth and final chapter explores public art projects that visualize dystopias amongst the proliferating scholarship that celebrates the inclusive nature of the twenty-first century. Heavily invoking Bourriaud's *Relational Aesthetics*[15] and Bishops' *Social Antagonisms*,[16] this chapter will explore public art projects that visualize the more uncomfortable reaction to the reality of today in order to prompt community building. Developing projects in which the invisible immigrant, victim, or group can be visualized and heard within public spaces, public artists have found ways to confront the public with the consequences of globalization without the same isolating nature of protest and new genre art of the twentieth century. Looking to the works of Maria Lind and Rosalyn Deutsche, the fourth chapter discusses the complex notion of public spaces, citizenship, and democracy in relation to public art. Numerous projects developed by artists such as Krzysztof Wodiczko and Marjetica Potrč turn to experiences of displacement, discrimination, and victimization to create open and honest platforms for transnational and intercultural exchange and dialogue. I investigate how these projects differ from projects that celebrate difference and otherness to envelop "the other" into the mainstream institution. Calling attention to the increase of private ownership of public space and questioning whether or not public space still exists, other projects featured utilize this contention as a means to thwart the

[15] Nicolas Bourriaud, *Relational Aesthetics*, trans. Simone Pleasance and Fronza Woods (Franc: Le Presse du Reel, 1998).
[16] Claire Bishop, "Antagonism and Relational Aesthetics," *October* (2004), 51-79.

encroachment of corporate power on every day lives. Also exploring public art as a means to surface the in-cohesiveness of seemingly unified communities, this chapter shows the contentious nature of public art as coming closer to attaining democratic principles. Responding to globalization within the very framework of reality it has created for us, the motif continues into the final chapter.

III. What Do Successful Communities Look Like?

In order to provide a more specific critical analysis, I need to define what I am positing as a successful art project within confines of this study. How successful or effective these projects are in prompting community building depends entirely on what I am defining as a community. Communities can exist virtually, in real space, or as a combination of the two. Contemporary scholar Nina Möntmann successfully defines communities:

> The distinctive qualities of new communities is a processual openness based on temporarily shared interests, or simply on a fortuitous moment of being there at the same time. This replaces unitary and essentialist models of community based on presence, identification, and immanence, calling into question national, religious, and cultural contexts. It is neither locally nor culturally bound.[17]

While communities are relative and may be temporary, they rely on shared interests, concerns, and/or goals. Successful communities, therefore, use their inherent collectivity to act. Of course success in terms of public art can be determined by a number of different factors including visitation, access, community response, technological prowess, etc, yet within the realm of this thesis, public works must instigate communities that act as catalysts for transformations, be they social, cultural, political, ecological, or all of the above. Whether that social transformation refers to an actual physical transformation of the natural, architectural, or social landscape, whether it

[17] Nina Möntmann, "New Communities," *Public* 39 (Spring, 2009), 16.

resides in the prompting of dialogue, discussion, and exchange, or whether it refers to the creation of instantaneous communities in which the audience leaves the project with a shift in perspective, the successful works I am searching for should *do* something. Rather than a commodified object that exists outside the realm of human interactions, successful public art projects provide models for beneficial public interactions between the land, technology, and social relations.

Amidst recent federal funding cuts to public art agencies[18] and a rise in corporate and private sponsorship of public projects, those who previously had a voice in the implementation of public art are being replaced by institutional and corporate financiers who use public art to advertise, control, and spread their brands. Community benefits and public interests are oftentimes left out of the larger missions of the projects. Therefore, it is my belief that projects that have a longer-term impact and can create lasting impressions on the public are those that will hopefully garner the attention of private funders, organizations, and developers. At a time when public art can help to enhance public and global dialogue among communities that could inspire hope, help, resistance, and security in those who have been lost in global chaos, it is important that these projects make some change or instigate some sort of transformation. Communities that are sustainable are those that can sustain dialogue even after the realization of the projects, which act as platforms for continued discussion and community engagement. While there is a place for spontaneous community creation and plop art, this thesis looks to the more durable community-creating projects as models for the exciting potential of public art in the future.

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[18] As of February 17, 2011, the United States House approved legislation to cut an additional $20.5 million from the National Endowment of the Arts' budget. To watch the debate go to "House Approves Amendment to Cut NEA Funding," *Americans for the Arts Action Fund*, 17 Feb. 2011, http://www.artsactionfund.org/news/entry/amendment-to-cut-nea-approved (accessed 10 Apr. 2011).

Chapter One: Identity Politics of Twentieth Century Public Art

I. Defining Public Art and Space: Who is the Public in Public Art?

Situating public art in a historiographical context is necessary for this discussion in order to position the case studies within the understanding of what public art constitutes. In the most general sense of the term, public art must be in a place accessible to the public. The physical space of the outdoors and the virtual site of the Internet are commonly thought of as public spaces. Public art today has become an interdisciplinary practice that oftentimes requires the need for not only artists, but also engineers, technology-specialists, scientists, etc. In terms of form, public art can range from sculpture to performance, intervention to activism, and virtual to site-specific. Public art is oftentimes funded and maintained through public funds designated by federal, state, and city governments. In many cases, it is paid for through government mandates that demand certain percentages of tax money to be used to fund the arts.[19] Yet, while government funding is behind many public art projects, there are a growing number of exceptions to this fundamental element. Private, corporate, and non-profit funding for public works are gaining increased popularity today as public artists utilize new forms of fundraising and corporate financiers have a new invested interest in the potential for this field. Access, funding, site-specificity, media, and public space are only a few of the complexities that characterize the nature of public art, and it is this convolution that makes this area of artistic practice such an exciting microcosm for illuminating the way global forces have affected artistic practices.

[19] The NEA, or National Endowment for the Arts is an example of a federal organization. For more information see "National Endowment for the Arts," http://www.nea.gov/ (accessed 18 Apr. 2011) and "Funding Sources for Public Art," PPS: Project for Public Spaces, http://www.pps.org/articles/artfunding/#perc (accessed 18 Apr. 2011).

Contemporary scholars Cameron Cartiere and Shelley Willis maintain that in order to be considered *public art*, work must be in the *public interest*; however, the concepts of 'public' and 'public interest' are unclear and complicated in their actual implications.[20] Firstly, who is the *public* in terms of public art? Jane Rendell questions the unqualified use of *public* as a term that homogenizes an infinitely heterogeneous population.[21] Also, the increased presence of private interests in public space has made the paradigmatic relationship of private and public much blurrier, a concept that will be explored more fully in the following chapters. Public space is usually characterized as free and democratic, but the control that private interests exert over what used to be deemed public has questioned how public space can once again be considered democratic and egalitarian. Traditionally, the democracy of public space is predicated on physical and contextual accessibility and the participatory nature of the space; however, this definition of democracy lacks the inherent conflict-centered nature of public space due to circumstances such as shifting power structures and the presentation of private interests.

Artwork in the *interest* of the *public* is highly problematic as well. What might benefit the public also assumes that the public is interested in one unified goal. Contemporary scholar Erika Doss enlightens readers about the controversial nature of public art in her discussion of projects meant to commemorate 9/11 in her recent publication, *Memorialmania*.[22] Controversies such as these reflect a divided, heterogeneous public that ultimately disagrees on the ways current events should be described, commemorated, and visualized in public spaces. The question of how accessible these public spaces and projects are and who is defining them will remain an element

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[20] Cameron Cartiere and Shelley Willis, eds., *The Practice of Public Art* (New York: Routledge, 2008), 2.
[21] For more discussion, see Rendell, "Public Art: Between Public and Private," in *Locality, Regeneration, and Divers[cities]*, edited by Sarah Bennett and John Butler, Intellect Books: Portland, 2000): 19-26.
[22] Erika Doss, "Memorial Mania," *Museum* (2008), http://www.aam-us.org/pubs/mn/memorialmania.cfm (accessed 1 Oct. 2010).

to consider in each of the case studies featured in this discussion as public space and public interest are homogenizing and impossible standards.

In order to gain valuable insight into public art projects, it is necessary to evaluate each work individually, as media, function, funding, accessibility, etc. all depend on specific contexts. Cartiere sees the constant infiltration of a variety of public art practices within diverse public spaces as the catalyst for the oftentimes negative or confused attitude towards public art writing, "Public art has crept into every corner of our society, perhaps, in part, that is why it is one of the most controversial and misinterpreted art disciplines of today."[23] Cartiere and Willis consider the lack of criticism placed on public art as reflective of the need for education and evaluation guidelines surrounding this area.[24] Setting guidelines for a critical approach to public art might be one way to improve and popularize the scholarship surrounding this area and is necessary in order to flesh out the growing complexity of this artistic practice. Suzanne Lacy sees the combination of a close reading critique, multivocal criticism, and the creation of a link between public practice to theory and history as a means for providing responsible, well-informed, and constructive criticism for public art.[25] The methodology utilized in this approach to public art follows the advice of Lacy, as it will provide the in-depth analyses necessary in order to evaluate each case study in a productive manner.

II. The Adverse Effects of Community-Sited Public Art:

Beginning in the early twentieth century, wars of independence, economic crises, and low levels of morale due to the effects of the World Wars instigated a new form of public art that

[23] Cartiere and Willis, 9.
[24] Cartiere and Willis, 2.
[25] Suzanne Lacy, "Time and Place: New Genre Public Art ad Decade Later," in *The Practice of Public Art,* eds. Cameron Cartiere and Shelley Willis (New York: Routledge, 2008), 21.

spoke to specific communities, cultures, and events, acting as precursors to the community-based public art projects in the 1960s. Works such as those created by the school of Mexican Muralists[26] in the early twentieth century and others commissioned in the U.S. by the WPA[27] in the 1930's functioned as reinforcements of emerging state ideologies, celebrating the communities that made up the new socio-political orders. While works continued to uphold the ideology of the state, their meaning and content transformed into images and representations that illuminated the significance and honor of the common man and the local community. Modern scholar Cher Kraus Knight maintains that states promoted and funded these public works as means to create social utopias as well as to demonstrate the importance of art in a democratic society.[28] These works opened the door for public art to focus on the needs of the people while still being commissioned and overlooked by the state.

By the 1960s, controversy over the war in Vietnam and a universal call for civil and human rights instigated new forms of public art as artists worked to subvert any notion of monumentality or grandeur connected to the state by organizing protests and demonstrations against the war and the existing power structure. Civil and human rights movements illuminated identity, community, culture, ethnicity, and race as significant issues that needed to be addressed

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[26] In the 1920's, artists like Diego Rivera and Jose Clemente Orozco painted a series of murals that took on added importance as they visualized and sought to reinforce emerging *mestizo* (commonly used to refer to a person of mixed race, more specifically of Native American and European blood) power surrounding Mexican independence movements in the twentieth century. In a number of public works such as Rivera's *The History of Mexico* (1929-1930) located in Mexico City's National Palace, public art became a means to celebrate indigenous life and visualize the utopian aspects of a community no longer oppressed by European control (Figure 1). Visualizations of a utopian past rest in images of Pre-Columbian rituals and customs while European invaders represent destruction, death, and disease. As mestizos began to gain visibility and power after the Mexican War of Independence, murals such as these reinforced the emerging identity of the state.

[27] In response to the Great Depression and the Dust Bowl Crisis, the U.S. government funded the Works Progress Administration (WPA) as part of FDR's New Deal. The WPA commissioned community murals and sculptures that sought to enrich the quality of life and encourage community pride. Works were located in central areas utilized by the community such as post offices and oftentimes fabricated by local artists or artists in need of work. The visual and contextual accessibility of these works spoke to the democratic considerations of public art and the populations the government intended to reach. Cher Kraus Knight writes that works like these were meant to "cultivate national pride in a shared culture" as they celebrated daily life and provided a means for community building. Cher Kraus Knight *Public Art: Theory, Practice and Populism* (Malden: Blackwell, 2008), 5.

[28] Knight, 5.

through grassroots activism. Community empowerment through public movements presented avenues for demanding equality in nations trying to preserve national unity. Searching for a way to gain visibility amidst a world dominated by the presumably white-run, male-dominated institution,[29] indigenous, racial, and ethnic rights groups fought to gain recognition, support, and equality. Public art, as opposed to the private space of the museum or gallery, provided a site that could be visible and accessible to a larger population of people. Public art historian Grant Kester writes, "Finally, many artists saw museums, with their boards of wealthy collectors and business people, as bastions of snobbish elitism in an era that demanded a more accessible and egalitarian form of art."[30] Collaborative community projects such as murals, demonstrations, parks, and performances were used as strategies for community empowerment. Utilizing counter-monumental forms[31] that rejected the impositional presence and infiltration of state ideology in marginalized communities, protest and activist art was inherently utilized to empower communities. People who had long been considered peripheral, operating as outsiders, gained

[29] Theoretically also referred to in this paper as the *center*, the *mainstream*, and the *dominant*.

[30] Grant Kester, "Beyond the White Cube: Activist Art and the Legacy of the 1960s", *Public Art Review* 14 No. 2 (Spring/Summer, 2003), 5.

[31] The counter-monument reflects the need for an art form that acknowledges the transformation of history and memory with the progression of time. Modern scholar James Young has focused a great deal of scholarship on the German struggle to commemorate an event the state itself perpetrated. The scholar maintains, "The counter-monument accomplishes what all monuments must: it reflects back to the people... and thus codifies... their own memorial projections and preoccupations." James Young, "The Counter-Monument: Memory Against Itself in Germany Today*," Critical Inquiry* 18 No. 2 (1992), 283. Young cites Jochen and Esther Shalev-Gerz as artists who designed and fabricated public works that questioned and confronted not only traditional monuments, but also the history and memory of WWII itself. Gerz' *Monument against Fascism* (1986-1993) in Hamburg, Germany utilized a de-centralized location in a lower class shopping mall, an uninviting 12 meter tall pillar of galvanized steel and lead and an interactive component in which passers-by signed their names on its surface. As the exposed surface began to fill with signatures and signs of vandalism, the counter-monument was lowered into the ground meter by meter until its ultimate disappearance into the symbolic void in the landscape just a few years after its erection. Rather than reinforcing the authority of the State and celebration of events perpetrated by it, Gerz' counter-monument posed as a structure that meant to symbolize, in the words of J. Gerz, "...it is only we ourselves who can stand up against injustice" Jochen Gerz and Esther-Shalev Gerz, "Monument against Fascism," http://www.gerz.fr/index.html (accessed 18 Apr. 2011). The necessity for interaction to arrive at the full integrity of the work reminds one of 60s Happenings in which the spontaneity and performance of the site elaborated the meaning of the work. The artist acted as a tool for setting up the scene of interaction. With little direction, Happenings reflected the momentary events of the site that incorporated the actions and effects of people and nature. Interactive, democratic in the sense that anyone might be able to participate, and ultimately ephemeral, Happenings countered any form of monumentality. These temporary public performances created a community bound together through the shared the experience of the being part of the artwork.

media attention and visibility. Knight describes the purpose of these types of projects writing that that they were meant to "foster individual and collective identity and integrate art into the social as well as physical space of a community."[32] And in Kester's words, "...community during the 1960s and 1970s referred to groups that were often alienated from the institutions of high art, such as poor and working class people."[33]

Community-sited public art became commonplace throughout the second half of the twentieth century as public campaigns for civil and human rights were more widely publicized. Artists took on new roles as instigators of community empowerment. Knight maintains, "Rather than authorities imposing agendas, artists function[ed] as agents for social change, seeking democratic models to share power."[34] Yet while grassroots communities established public art practices as means to gain rights and visibility, expressing a desire to emerge from the periphery into the focus of the center, projects meant to empower ran the risk of cultural commodification and homogenization. Posing peripheral identities against the power of the center, protest and activist art of the 60s and 70s not only homogenized communities based on gender, ethnicity, and race, but also reinforced the border between the center and periphery by reinforcing peripheral difference from the mainstream.[35] As these communities gained recognition by

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[32] Knight, 117.
[33] Kester, 6.
[34] Knight, 112.
[35] Two significant examples of this type of community-based public art are sectarian murals in Belfast, Northern Ireland and Chicano Park in San Diego, California. The Falls and Shankhill neighborhoods in Belfast house some of the most violent sites of the Northern Irish Troubles (Figures 2). Run by gang-like Nationalist and Loyalist paramilitary forces like the Irish Republican Army (IRA) and the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF), members of the opposing bands and their families lived in close proximity to one another. Sectarian murals distinguished loyalty through a combination of visual techniques. As history paintings, these murals acted as community monuments that celebrated the honor of those who fought for their cause and established cultural symbols and iconography through which the public could share a common identity through collective memory. As memorials, they commemorated those victimized; however, commemorations were also meant to instigate resentment and anger against the opposition to reinforce the cause. As visual boundary markers meant to make certain areas distinct as Protestant or Catholic, sectarian murals became tools of empowerment with which to gain political and social representation. However, the use of cultural and religious iconography homogenized communities into one collective identity that

publicizing their collective identities and their cultural and ethnic otherness, they effectively reinforced the division between the self and other. Orientalizing[36] and/or otherizing, exoticizing, self-orientalizing, self-otherizing, self-exoticizing, community empowerment projects of the 60s and through the 70s oftentimes stunted the possibility for expressing the heterogeneity and diversity within the community. Celebrating the other also posed as a reinforcement of the institution's continued power over the periphery. In the words of the philosopher Theodore Adorno, "...[i]n the end, glorification of the splendid underdogs is nothing other than glorification of the splendid systems that make them so."[37]

By the 1990's, New Genre Public Art referred to that which was community-based, dialogic, and meant to enhance community cultural development.[38] Multicultural and multidisciplinary, projects considered under this category expressed a desire to reach out to and interact between multiple cultures, ethnicities, identities, and meanings. New genre projects expanded from the nature of ethnic and cultural identity to include projects focused on communities linked by collective identities based on homosexuality, neighborhood life, and gender. They presented an expansion of the institution into the realm of the periphery as artists

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ultimately posed "us" versus "them." Reinforcing difference from Loyalist identity, Nationalist murals reinforced difference at a time when the latter group was ultimately in pursuit of equal human rights. The public artwork that lines Chicano Park in the Barrio Logan neighborhood of San Diego first appeared in the 1970's (Figure 3). Mexican immigrants began settling in the area around the 1890's and continued until the mid 1950's. During the 1960's and 70's, the building of the Coronado Bridge displaced many people living in the largely Mexican-American community. In an effort to take back what they felt had been wrongfully taken from them, neighbors within the community banded together under a Mexican-American identity and demanded a park be granted under the bridge pylons. As community members reclaimed the site through the artistic visualization of Mexican-American identity and culture, students from around California travelled to San Diego to offer aid and support. Murals in Chicano Park picture anything from Aztec deities to Mexican-American history and heroes and have continued to be updated and renovated to the present day.

[36] For an elaboration on the concept of Orientalism, see Edward Said, "Imaginative Geography and Its Representations: Orientalising the Oriental," *Orientalism* (Pantheon Books, 1978).

[37] Theodore Adorno, *Minima Moralia: Reflections from a Damaged Life*, trans. E. F. N. Jephcott (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1985), 28. Also see Neil Lazarus, "National Consciousness and the Specificity of (post) Colonial Intellectualism," in *Colonial Discourse/Postcolonial Theory*, eds. Francis Barker, Peter Hulme, and Margaret Iversen (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1996), 211 and J.P. Park, "The Cult of Origin: Identity Politics and Cultural Capital in Contemporary Chinese Art," *Yishu Journal of Contemporary Chinese Art* 9 (2010), 68.

[38] Lacy, *New Genre Public Art a Decade Later*, 19.

and organizations developed and sponsored projects sited for public spaces outside of the gallery and museum.[39] New genre artists developed temporary works in hopes that after leaving the site, the community could sustain itself. In some cases, new genre projects were successful, as in the case of HAHA's *Flood*, a project that eventually led to the creation of an HIV/AIDS facility in Chicago's Rogers Park in 1997 (Figure 4).[40] Collaborative projects such as these sustain interest in public art pieces and community dialogue as their transitory status can continue to keep people involved. Creeping into the realm of social work and urban development, new genre public art was meant to allow for collaborative and interactive experiences between community members. The mainstream worked to transport the periphery into the center; however, the focus of the institution on the marginalized many times fell into the inescapable post-colonial paradox in which celebrating otherness was a means of reinforcing otherness as inferiority.

As democratic and collaborative as new genre projects generally sounded, community empowerment projects were not always the vision of the actual community-members. Projects inspired by postcolonial needs to address the invisible and marginalized who operated on the periphery became commonplace through the funds of public art agencies rather than grassroots organizations spawned by the peripheral community. In Chicago, curator Mary Jane Jacob developed *Culture in Action* (1993) to specifically focus on disenfranchised neighborhoods distinct from those usually the focus of the mainstream art world. Art critic Joseph Scanlan

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[39] HAHA's organization of a group of twenty to thirty artists referred to as Flood ultimately led to the creation of a collaborative hydroponic garden in a Chicago storefront window. The project was originally commissioned for *Culture in Action* in Chicago in 1993. Plants chosen for the garden have a therapeutic effect on those with HIV, and between 1992 and 1995, Flood harvested the vegetables and herbs from the garden to provide bi-weekly meals, educative programs, and public events for instigating awareness on alternative therapies. The Guerrilla Girls became popular for their invasive and explosive interventions in public space meant to challenge the power of masculinity in public space. In Los Angeles, Judy Baca's *Great Wall of Los Angeles* (1976-2003) became an infamous example of public art projects that championed the recognition and celebration of diversity (Figure 5). Visualizing the ethnic history of the multicultural city, the mile and half long mural allowed for inter-racial dialogue, collaboration, and research and has continued to grow on an online platform.

[40] HAHA, "Flood: An Active Volunteer Network for Active Participation in Healthcare," http://www.hahahaha.org/projFlood.html (accessed 17 Mar. 2011).

writes, "*Culture in Action* set out to provide forums for culture in otherwise undeserved communities by generating culture from within the communities themselves, as opposed to simply serving up a local statue or mural."[41] However, while the project attempted to reach out to 'invisible' communities, many critics claimed that *Culture in Action* became invisible itself. The site of the periphery shifted between ethnically distinct neighborhoods as Latino and African-American communities received the majority of attention. Daniel Martinez organized the West Side 3-Point Marchers seeking to combine the neighboring African American and Mexican American communities into one community as the project culminated in a parade.

The site-specific communities in some instances remained invisible to the larger Chicago public while others literally paraded through the streets wearing the flags of ethnic identity. Art historian Jeff Kelley writes, "...site-specificity has experienced a radical reversal in recent years: where it was once a means to better integrate art into the spaces of the everyday, to better accommodate the public, it has become a means to overrun the public and meaningfulness of local places and cultures."[42]

Yet the unnaturalness of this community points to what Miwon Kwon describes as "invented community groups."[43] Suggesting an institutional imposition on the site of the community in both targeting and imposing structure on it, this form of public art can be a detrimental quality of new genre art and site-specificity. Hal Foster describes this type of site-specific art as the place where the mainstream can expand: "...the institution may exploit such site-specific work in order to expand its operations"[44] As the institution encroaches upon liminal

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[41] Joseph Scanlan, "Culture in Action," *Frieze Magazine* 13 (1993), http://www.frieze.com/issue/article/culture_in_action/ (accessed 1 Oct. 2010).
[42] Miwon Kwon, *One Place After Another: Site-Specific Art and Locational Identity* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2004), 109.
[43] Kwon, 128.
[44] Hal Foster, *The Return of the Real: The Avant-Garde at the End of the Century* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1996), 306.

spaces, the former entity exerts control over the latter's representation, and ultimately gains the power to commodify the culture the institution originally meant to help or celebrate. Lippard writes, "When an artist tries to bring back the original place that lies under the site, s/he runs the danger of creating a nostalgic facade or a stage set-a stage set-a small-scale theme park for "tourists" from other parts of the city."[45] In many cases, new genre projects tended to homogenize the community and allow for artists from outside of the community to develop and impose ideas that failed to articulate the community's particular needs and desires. Voicing a community identity controlled by the artist rather than the community itself, Kwon maintains, "The identity that is created by the art project is viewed as a self-affirming, self-validating "expression" of a unified community, as if the community or any collective group could be fully self-presentable to communicate its self-presence to others with immediacy."[46]

Public projects like these failed to lead to a substantial shift in the socio-political status of marginalized and disenfranchised groups from the periphery to mainstream, and they were unsuccessful in the initiation of sustainable change. Suzanne Lacy writes,

> The promise of 1970s activist artists was a social transformation that could be accomplished through art. But in significant ways, that has not occurred. While making and exhibiting public and community-based art undeniably affected individual lives, artists who tackled political issues, from violence against women to public school education hope for more than individual change.[47]

By the end of the twentieth century, this celebrated multiculturalism was over-run by post-colonial critiques that challenged the sincerity of the multicultural project.[48] Public artists had only begun to find ways to award power and agency to disenfranchised groups, but for the most part, the center and periphery remained distinct.

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[45] Lippard, *Lure of the Local*, 271.
[46] Kwon, 151.
[47] Suzanne Lacy, "Finding Our Way to the Flag: Is Civic Discourse Art?" *Public Art Review* 14 No. 1 (2003), 29.
[48] See discussion in Introduction, p. 1.

'Where should we go?"[49] is an essential and exciting question that many twentieth century public art projects failed to address. As the recognition of transformative replaces or overlaps with cultural and ethnic identities, public art has been once again re-focused its mission to address the (supposed) needs of the people of today. Yet unlike twentieth century protest and new genre projects, public artists look outside the isolating sites of ethnicity and culture to instigate communities across regional and national boundaries. Factors such as the environment, the consequences of globalization, and the experiences of displacement bind these new communities together. Organizing expansive means to instigate community-formation in which the community determines the meaning and function of the work, contemporary forms of public art defy the limiting binary of center and periphery by working between the two. Rather than focus on the microcosm of the neighborhood, new communities incorporate the interactions of participants across cultures, a more realistic approach to reflecting the nature of public interactions. "The role of artworks," Bourriaud writes, "is no longer to form imaginary and utopian realities, but to actually be ways of living and models of action with the existing real, whatever scale chosen by the artist."[50] I contend that while protest and new genre public art projects of the early 90s were ineffective because of the continued homogenizing effect of institutionally-imposed communities, public artists have found ways to instigate community-building by expanding the options for collective identities no longer solely placed on locality, ethnicity, and nationality.

[49] Bourriaud, *Altermodern*, 40.
[50] Bourriaud, *Relational Aesthetics*, 12.

Chapter Two: Technology and New Media in Public Art Practices

I. Expanding Network Capabilities:

The infiltration of the media into even the tiniest and most invisible populations and cultures is a testament to this technologically driven age. Among one of the many facets transnationalism brings to the table is the understanding that ways of identifying oneself and identifying with others may expand through the ability to verbally, virtually, and visually communicate with people and places previously too linguistically, politically and culturally unfamiliar and distant. Public art projects now prompt the establishment of communities that form based on events and exchange that affect international populations. Dissimilar cultures can translate these technology-supported interactions in order to be understood. Bourriaud writes of the new capabilities for unfamiliar cultures to come into contact with one another and remarks on the hope this has sustained for conflict resolution. He refers to Edouard Glissant's statement, "The world is becoming creolized, that is to say that the cultures of the world are furiously and knowingly coming into contact with each other, changing by exchanging, through irremediable collisions and ruthless wars-but also through breakthroughs of moral conscience and hope."[51]

While it is true that technology in public art has allowed for an unprecedented scale of communicating and sharing amongst greater distances and differences than ever before, it is important to note this fact wearily, as most public artists fail to use this potential to instigate some sort of social change by prompting durable communities. What is missing from most community building public art projects today is an element of identity that allows for the viewer/participant to become involved with the project on a level further under the aesthetic surface. While many twentieth century public art projects focused too closely on an isolating

[51] Nicolas Bourriaud, *The Radicant* (New York: Lucas and Sternberg, 2009), 20. From Edouard Glissant, *Introduction A Une Poetique Du Divers* (Paris: Gallimard, 1996), 15.

characterization of identity, the most contemporary forms of public art lack an identifying element that initiates community formation. Perhaps this latter dilemma is due to the oftentimes anonymous nature of network relations in which virtual identities and global communications take place outside of physical, face-to-face interactions. Sean Cubitt writes:

> In the age of the global corporation, relations come first. People are not even termini but nodes through which income and expenditure, meanings and opinions, use and exchange pass, refocused surely, even individualized... but never arrested in a discrete identity. It is not that we have no bodies, but that those bodies are no longer the defining media of our relationships. The face to face is a privileged moment of access in a working week of remote and mediated conversations.[52]

While the Internet and the universal digital visual language of technology can aid in the translation of meanings and significance to unfamiliar audience members, there must be a mechanism that calls for continued exchange in order for the project to continue and encourage a social transformation. Cubitt's words respond to many of the relationships established using the Internet today. However, successful public artists have found ways to infuse the projection of individual identities back into these relationships, denying the anonymous nature of digital interactions.

Public artist John Unger talks more in depth about the potential of the Internet to reach wider audiences and provide greater possibilities for the commissioning of more public art projects.[53] Given the freedom for anyone with access to the Web to initiate a project and the possibility for raising awareness and interest in the project through any number of online forums, the Internet holds the potential for coming closer to a democratic public space. Jarret Keene of

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[52] Sean Cubitt, "From Internationalism to Transnations: Networked Art and Activism," in *At a Distance: Precursors to Art and Activism on the Internet,* eds. Annmarie Chandler and Norie Neumark (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2005), 434.

[53] In an entry for his blog, Unger proposes an open-source model for public art that could be almost completely transparent in terms of funding, sharing research, scheduling, and community input. For more on this, John Unger, "Open Source Public Art: A Proposed Model," http://blog.johntunger.com/2005/07/open_source_pub.html (accessed 4 Mar. 2011).

Public Art Review writes, "Over the Web, more people can be reached using Craigslist, plain old email, and all kinds of location-based web services."[54] Unger and Keene see the Web as the potential site for fundraising for public-art projects. Keene also cites the potential for the Internet to increase participation in the development of public art projects, a process that is traditionally largely confined to commissioning and funding agencies. The 'transparency' of the public art project can offer mechanisms through which the public can actually follow the public art process, become involved, and have a voice in matters concerning the public space. This transparency can translate into more democratic forms of public art making as it is integrated in public dialogue rather than kept within the hands of a relatively small and perhaps privatized group of individuals.

While globalization has boasted an increase in access to these mechanisms, we must continue to question whether this access is a privilege for some and a barrier for others. If public art projects only exist within the worlds capitalism has infiltrated, are the works the reinforcement of post-colonial boundaries all over again while celebrating transnationalism and interculturalism along the way? And if exchange and interaction are occurring within the confines of capitalist markets, are identities being replaced with one global culture that provides everyone an opportunity to interact, but no one a chance to be an individual? Cubitt touches upon a few these questions writing, "The network artist is not a person. A person authors, takes responsibility for their work...And to the extent that network arts require the participation of users, it is the user who must take responsibility for the work that's made."[55] While participatory structures are much more conducive to democratic forms of art, the question of authorship and the nature of interaction remains unclear. Should the anonymity of network art suggest that artist

[54] Jarret Keene, "The Great Wide Open: Can the Internet and Open-Source Technology Expand the Limits of Public Art?" *Public Art Review* (2008), 36.
[55] Cubitt, "Networked Art and Activism," 434.

and community must maintain an egalitarian relationship to be democratic? It seems this ideally should be so, but the very act of developing a platform for public interaction inherently creates a distinction between author and community. In his publication *Internet Art: The Online Clash of Culture and Commerce*, Julian Stallabrass acknowledges this inability for an egalitarian interface as network artists create structures for the community to navigate and make choices. While there may be choices within the structure, we must question how expansive these frameworks really are.

In the twenty-first century, when a great deal of public art projects are funded by corporate financiers that control our public spaces, projects meant to create a societal shift are de-prioritized by the sexiness of digitally enhanced projects that ultimately act as marketing schemes. By appealing to fireworks sensations, corporate-funded projects play into the spread of global capitalism that homogenizes the audience into one viewing public that responds to the same form of spectacular, high-tech display. Meanwhile, this attempt at utter de-diversification has illuminated the appearance of public artists who have found ways to create communities and collective identities through their public works. Fighting the encroachment of an essentialist global culture, public artists are embracing some of the most exciting products of globalization and capitalism. Re-infusing the need for individual and collective identities in a process of community formation and allowing for online platforms to create social transformations in physical spaces, the public artists who use diverse forms of technology today are deconstructing the new post-colonial paradox from within the paradigm of globalization.

II. Technology at Its Finest:

The new connective potential of the Internet and the creative use of technology including LED screens, digital sensors, and data projectors evoke a new and constantly changing form of public space in which communities can form and be sustained through digital interactions. Stallabrass writes of the positive potential for Internet art in his claim that interactive art can empower users, encourage cultural activity, make art more responsive, and open art's exclusive spaces.[56] The digital technology utilized for the projects discussed below allow participants to interact amidst large, expansive distances through what Bourriaud calls "a single system of codes-the binary language of computing..."[57] in which people can culturally interact and exchange without barriers. Sal Randolph writes, "The Internet is a fascinating kind of public space, because you have no idea about who will eventually find their way to your art, and it expands the range of possibilities about whom you will end up collaborating with."[58] Open source technology encourages participant feedback and 'collective production'.[59] However, as intercultural and transnational exchange occurs, symbols of personal and collective identity become lost in translation. Bourriaud addresses this understanding in his claim that "digitization weakens the presence of the source, since every generation of an image is merely one moment in a chain without a beginning or an end."[60] As a project takes on a digital existence, a reliance on the physical location no longer necessarily informs the meaning and content. Contemporary scholar Hou Hanru upholds:

> In terms of culture, a new phenomenon...is the unprecedented acceleration of the destruction of local cultures and the formation of new communication and cultures based on the "virtual neighborhood," which brings people from different

[56] Julian Stallabrass, *Internet Art: The Online Clash of Culture and Commerce* (London: Tate Publishing, 2003), 61.
[57] Bourriaud, *Radicant*, 133.
[58] Keene, 34.
[59] Keene, 35.
[60] Bourriaud, *Radicant*, 134.

> parts of the world in closer contact than they are with their actual neighbors thanks to the Internet and other electronic media.[61]

While the downfall of cultural empowerment projects lay in the isolating nature of identity and locality, the struggle for contemporary community building projects lay in the dissipation of identity and locality. Finding a balance between the two is not an easy task, and the first few projects described below will illuminate the inherent problematics of new media public art.

The Media Facade Festival was originally organized in 2008 and then again in 2010, generated from the organization Public Art Lab and Berlin's cultural center Collegium Hungaricum Berlin (CHB).[62] As a new media public art exhibition using high-tech screens located throughout the city as exhibition platforms, this project brought together a range of interdisciplinary activities and people in the organization of workshops, exhibitions, lectures, conferences, and publications. In 2008, the Media Facade Festival took place on screens located throughout Berlin exhibiting over twenty works from different local new media artists. Screens located at CHB, Berlin's O2 World (event center), and the Gasometer (electric company's water tower) linked the city through the digital exhibition of public art. Organizers behind this exhibition maintain:

> We currently face a transitional period of restructuring social networks in a globalized world. This is resulting in various experiments with new types of relations and exchange processes, supported by the developing interactive new media tools. In order to maintain the social sustainability of our cities, it is important to connect this new virtual space for development of public sphere and social exchange with the acquisition and reactivation of urban public space.[63]

While some projects responded directly to the local population, most projects were disconnected from any specific identity or thought-provoking meaning. In 2008, *City Sleep Lights*, designed

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[61] Hou Hanru, "Towards a New Locality: Biennials and "Global Art,"" *The Manifesta Decade: Debates on Contemporary Art in Post-Wall Europe*, ed. Barbara Vanderlinden and Elena Filipovic (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2005), 59.

[62] Sponsored, in 2008, by Hauptstadtkulturfonds Berlin, Berlin Capital Funds, and the Senate for Economy, Technology and Women – Project Future Berlin.

[63] "Media Facade Festival Berlin 2008," 7 Sept. 2008, http://nait5.com/2008/09/07/media-facades-festival-berlin-2008/ (accessed 3 July 2010).

by Antoine Schmitt, reflected the calculated light emissions from the city in the mathematical transformation of the screen's light emission patterns (Figure 6). Presented on the Gasometer, a screen located in the midst of a Berlin residential neighborhood, the late night light emissions led to a heated discussion among residents angered by the emanating light of the work and a few others displayed late into the night. In 2010, the Media Facade curators and programmers had to impose light restrictions on participating artists. As Unger insists:

> Public art projects have the potential to unite or divide communities. Public artworks have proven to have a highly beneficial impact when community residents feel they have been consulted, informed, involved, and invited to participate. When a community feels a large-scale project has been conducted without its involvement, complaints and ill will are likely to arise.[64]

Rather than bring a community together, however, projects exhibited as part of the program angered citizens because of the blatant disruption the works imposed on the non-integrated public.

In 2010, the Media Facade Festival expanded to include a transnational audience as the project became part of the initiative of new media organizations in Helsinki, Madrid, Brussels, Linz, Liverpool, and Budapest. Using interface technologies, projects shown in different cities not only connected viewers into one European participating public, but also allowed for direct communication through media facades. Most projects that were part of the 2010 Media Facade Festival lacked any relation to locality as they were meant for audiences across Europe. Although Schmidt's *City Sleep Light* once again reflected light emissions from Berlin, other projects were disconnected from local realities. Most focused solely on creative uses of digital technologies to create works, and only a few relied on interaction from public participants. VR/Urban's[65] *SMS Slingshot* necessitated audience participation as the artist collective

[64] Keene, 36 and see John Unger's "Open Source Public Art: A Proposed Model."
[65] VR/Urban is the artist collective of Christan Zollner and Patrick Tobias Fischer.

developed a digital slingshot that could 'fling' messages from the participant to the media facade shared by both Berlin and Liverpool (Figures 7, 8). While participants grabbed at the opportunity to use the device, those that got to experience the transnational platform mostly sent meaningless messages that failed to instigate a continued dialogue. Johanna Bruckner's *Mobile Dinner* brought Berlin dinner guests to the approximately twenty-five yard-long dinner tables outside the CHB. Berliners were meant to virtually dine with Linz, although the project never seemed to resolve its technical mishaps. While Ulu Braun's *The Park/Westcoast* seemed to respond to the ecological deterioration of today's urban centers, its lack of relation to the viewing public, other than a distant Mercedes symbol, geared the piece in a more fantastical direction. While visually exciting and perhaps formally intriguing, the projects enlisted a quick look around from passers-by, but the only real community that formed and continued consists of the people involved in the project development. Illuminative of the potential for new media projects within the architecture of urban spaces, the Media Facade Festival lacked any sustainable dialogue between the cities involved in a public context.

Perhaps part of this emerges from the fact that the Media Facade Festival is funded largely through corporate sponsorship including T-Mobile and Stiftung Lotto.[66] Because sponsorship denotes a form of control over the production, artists involved must work within boundaries appropriate to positively reinforcing this technology. In terms of the privately owned sites for the media facades, 2010 exhibition curator Mirjam Struppek notes, "During the development of projects it also became apparent that the built facades serving as screens would always reveals something about their corporate operators, which defines their relationship with

[66] Other funding and technological sponsors include: Wall, Megaposter, Berliner Fenster, Belgian Posters, Nacamar, Streampark.tv, n-tv, Geier-Tronic Videotechnik, Arcotel, Cookies Cream, Culture Programme, Education and Culture DG, and projekt zukunft.

the general urban environment and the particular locale."[67] This calls attention to the blurred boundaries between the public art audience and consumer culture in general. The Media Facade Festival resides within the realm of the privileged public, as access is limited to very specific first-world cities. Although an exciting temporary exhibition, the inability of the project to maintain any sort of sustained impact or community is related to the disjunction between the work and the community. The only shared experience that links the community created with the Media Facade Festival is transitory interaction with the works connected through instantaneous communicative networks.

Raphael Lozano-Hemmer's work provides a combination of public art examples that integrate, track, and project public interactions in online platforms and real (physical) space. *Body Movies*, first exhibited in 2001 in Rotterdam and transported to a number of different countries and cities ranging from New Zealand to Lisbon and Hong Kong, uses sensors, photographic imaging, and digital projectors to capture the instantaneous environment.[68] Gathering photographic portraits from subjects on the street, robotically-controlled projectors display the images within the silhouettes of passers-by. *Pulse Park,* installed in Madison Square Park in 2008, uses censors to measure the heart rate of participants in the project (Figure 9). Lights illuminate the vital signs of the collective participants and in the words of the artist, "the resulting effect is the visualization of vital signs, arguable our most symbolic biometric, in an urban scale."[69] Using public space as a forum for spontaneous passers-by to interact with the work, these projects fail to produce durable communities amongst participants. A display of

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[67] Mirjam Struppek, "A Plea for the Media Arts," *Public Art Review* 21 (2008), 48.

[68] "Body Movies," Raphael Lozano-Hemmer, last modified 2011, http://www.lozano-hemmer.com/body_movies.php (accessed 2 Feb. 2011).

[69] "Pulse Park," Raphael Lozano-Hemmer, last modified 2011, http://www.lozano-hemmer.com/pulse_park.php (accessed 2 Feb. 2011).

technology, they have no long-term effects other than their possible display in other cities. Encouraging interaction only with his work rather than amongst participants, the distracting qualities of technology overrun the tensions underlying public spaces.

Other public projects only exist in virtual space, allowing access only to those who have the required technology. The Virtual Public Art Project (VPAP) is an organization that promotes the creation of new media artworks in the virtual space of the cities. Using Google Earth 3-D plug-in technology, visitors to the virtual city can navigate their Smartphones and 3-G equipment to locate public art pieces digitally developed and virtually exhibited. Superimposing original public art into the virtual landscape, artists can create low budget, site-specific pieces without permanently transforming the physical landscape.

The Jersey City sponsored project, *Veiled Presence,* presented in June 2010, envisions a large, igloo like structure in Liberty State Park (Figure 10). The holed blue dome expands in a three thousand foot diameter and measures over 300 feet high.[70] By downloading Layar Reality Browser's Augmented Reality plugin,[71] one can virtually experience the site of the project. Artist Matthew West writes of the interactive nature of his project:

> The structure was designed with the intention to secularize notions of sacred and utopian forms. Through the combination of interface and site-specificity, this piece places the ball in the participant's court, calling for active involvement in the experience through Augmented Reality.[72]

Of course, once again, access is a major concern in addressing the "public-ness" of this work. Also, the simulative nature of the navigation through the work is much like playing a video game, but the lack of interaction with other visitors to the *augmented reality* emphasizes the

[70] "The Virtual Public Art Project," last modified 11 Jan. 2011, http://virtualpublicartproject.com/Virtual_Public_Art_Project/Virtual_Public_Art_Project.html (accessed 4 Jan. 2011).
[71] Augmented Reality is a computer program that allows you to digitally interact within virtual space.
[72] Matthew West, "Veiled Presence," 14 Nov. 2010, http://virtualpublicartproject.com/Virtual_Public_Art_Project/Exhibitions_Veiled_Presence.html (accessed 4 Jan. 2011).

individual rather than communal experience this type of work creates. The inability of *Veiled Presence* to exist as anything more than a 3-D rendering questions the effectiveness of virtual public art.[73] Lacking any means to establish a relationship or collective identity amongst collaborators, projects like West's reflect a process of de-individualization.

III. The Interplay between Virtual and Real Space:

Part of the solution to the dilemma described above is to combine the potential for technology to reach global audiences with a platform for shared interactions between viewer/participant communities. Rather than retaining almost complete control over the project, those that are more successful tend to allow for a more involved community to produce and define meaning for the work. In this way, artists can use virtual communities to realize projects in the physical landscape.

RSA's Arts and Ecology Centre[74] commissioned artist Dirk Flesichmann, who once considered himself a Second Life Artist, to develop a piece concerning ecology for the virtual community. Web-based platforms such as Second Life allow for participants to create alternate realities and interact through virtual identities. These alternate worlds include elements that allude to reality: culture, violence, and art.[75] After a one-year hiatus from Second Life, Fleischmann returned in 2009 to utilize his avatar, Flex Dix, in the instigation of an ecological campaign that grabbed the attention of the virtual community. RSA in partnership with ZKM

[73] As a side note, many of VPAP's projects are good examples of contemporary models for counter-monuments. To see a more in depth discussion, see Young, "Monument against Itself."
[74] RSA Arts and Ecology Centre and Arts Council England have just ended their partnership as RSA Arts and Ecology to pursue Citizen Power, an art project that will focus more closely on sustainability and placemaking. The RSA website and blog are in the process of being archived. For more information, see "Arts and Ecology," http://www.artsandecology.org.uk/ (accessed 10 Apr. 2011).
[75] Beijing artist, Cao Fei, otherwise known for her Second Life identity, China Tracy, uses gaming technologies to create videos that reflect on themes revolving around identity.

Centre for Art and Media[76] helped Fleischmann/Dix realize *Myforrestfarm*, a project meant to counter the ecological effects technologies like Second Life create for the real environment (Figures 11). The RSA Arts and Ecology blog upholds, "For this project, Fleischmann is responding to the activities on SL by actively planting a forest farm in real life. This is intended to off-set the carbon consumption that the SL computer servers use, in particular ZKM Island."[77] Developing a reforestation project in the Philippines in collaboration with artist Thomas Daquioag and farm caretaker Rodolfo Ferrer and mirroring the tree planting in Second Life, *myforestfarm* provides a website in which visitors can track the reforestation project. Each tree is photographed separately, available for sale at the e-store for ten Euros. The income funds the continual planting of trees. "The visual validation of *myforestfarm* is combined with ontological thought. The result is a series of photos which substitutes carbon credits as a commodity."[78] Sustained by the interaction between the online community and the project, *myforestfarm* is a self-sustaining public art project as photographs of reforestation trees planted in the Philippines are sold to online participants who fund the planting of another tree. Referring to money in terms of carbon credits, this project calls on the ability to 'digitize nature' and at the same time, points to creative ways to counteract growing commodification and environmental abuse through the help of digital communities. The artist writes,

> Usual reforestation projects transform the CO sequestration of trees into a tradable carbon credit. This commodification process is a financial invention that is re-evaluated by *myforestfarm.* Instead of certifying and trading carbon credits, the carbon credit becomes the subject matter.[79]

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[76] ZKM represents Zentrum für Kunst und Medientechnologie Karlsruhe. The program focuses specifically on the potential of new media practices and its impact on science, art, politics, and finance.
[77] Dirk Fleischmann, "Myforestfarm," 2010, http://web.me.com/dirk.fleischmann/myforestfarm/about.html (accessed 16 Feb. 2011).
[78] Fleischmann, "Myforestfarm."
[79] Fleischmann, "Myforestfarm."

The transparency of the process the artist utilizes to sustain this project also illuminates another route public artists can follow to help encourage collaboration among community members. The amount of information on the project's website, the ability to virtually tour the reforestation project in the Philippines, and continued discussion on the blog has successfully created a community that instigates social and ecological transformations in real space. Begun from the utilization of virtual communities, the artist has provided a platform in which the communities can continue to exist and expand into the future.

The intersection between public space and open-source technology has demonstrated its effectiveness in numerous projects. REBAR's *PARK(ing) Intervention* (2010) in San Francisco, CA transformed parking spots on overcrowded city streets into public spaces for people to gather, complete with grass and a bench (Figure 12). Creating communities through attracting spontaneous passers-by and those who followed the location on the project's website, REBAR uses open source technology to call attention to the need for gathering places and local, face-to-face interactions in light of encroaching urbanization. Increasingly, downtowns lack public outdoor space as so much land in today's urban centers is devoted to private spaces overrun by buildings and vehicles. Jarret Keene calls attention to the temporary park-like dimension *PARK(ing) Intervention* entails because, by renting the space (i.e., plunking quarters in the meter), a small temporary public park is created that provides nature, seating, and shade.[80]

Beginning in San Francisco, the idea for this project spread through California, throughout the country, and eventually throughout the world from London to Rio de Janeiro as REBAR has effectively instigated dozens of temporary public parks. Using their website as a platform for providing instruction, inspiration, and models for creating this type of public space, REBAR effectively counteracts the negative effects of globalization by emphasizing the lack of

[80] Keene, 35.

public space, nature, and community interaction within urban spaces. With a Creative Commons License, artists and participants can re-install *PARK(ing) Intervention* within their own communities without running any copyright infringement risks,[81] reinforcing the intent for reproduction. Utilizing funds donated by the Trust for Public Land,[82] REBAR's website can maintain its effectiveness in providing a platform for international artists to sustain the local and the larger international communities by continually finding and providing ways to implement this form of art.

Raphael Lozano-Hemmer's *Vectorial Elevation* provides a successful example of utilizing the combination of a Web-based platform and site-specific projections to develop and sustain a project that has expanded from its original location in Mexico City in 1999 to its most recent installation in Vancouver in 2010 (Figures 13).[83] Developing a website that allows any user to design a light sculpture, or mapped light projection, into the sky over Mexico City's Zócalo Square, Lozano-Hemmer created a platform in which any visitor, whether local or international, could participate by creating his own website page containing his design along with personal information such as name, location, and comments.[84] "These web pages were

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[81] Keene, 35. Creative Commons is a non-profit organization that helps to create legal infrastructure to grant copyright permissions for their creative work...Every license helps retain copyright while allowing others to copy, distribute, and make some uses of work. Creative Commons licenses ensure creators get the credit for their work. Every Creative Commons license works around the world and lasts as long as applicable copyright lasts (because they are built on copyright). Taken from the Creative Commons webpage, "Creative Commons," http://creativecommons.org/licenses/ (accessed 2 Apr. 2011).

[82] "The Trust for Public Land (TPL) is a national, nonprofit, land conservation organization that conserves land for people to enjoy as parks, community gardens, historic sites, rural lands, and other natural places, ensuring livable communities for generations to come." Trust for Public Land, http://www.tpl.org/tier2_sa.cfm?folder_id=170 (accessed 2 Apr. 2011).

[83] Other cities that have housed this project include Dublin (2004), Lyon (2003), and Vitoria-Gasteiz (2002).

[84] *Vectorial Elevation* was first conceived in dialogue with Mexico City. Lozano-Hemmer writes, "The Minister of Culture in Mexico...said that the proposal needed to stem from an episode in Mexican history. I then nominated as a starting point the fact that cybernetics was first postulated in Mexico City at the Nacional Centre fro Cardiology in 1946, where Mexican cardiologist Arturo Rosenbleuth was working with Noebert Wiener to try to understand self-regulation of the heart. They hypothesised the theory of messages and feedback in order to understand this phenomenon. Based on this I proposed cybernetics as a part of Mexican history and thus 'Vectorial Elevation' as a project," Andrew Dewdney and Peter Ride, "'Vectorial Elevation'-public arts project: Raphael Lozano-Hemmer," in *The New Media Handbook* (New York: Routledge, 2006), 202.

completely uncensored, allowing participants to leave a wide variety of messages, including love poems, football scores, Zapatistaslogans[85] and twenty-seven marriage proposals. In Mexico, this project attracted 800,000 participants from 89 countries over the course of its two-week period."[86] These statistics point to another significant element of Web-based art: the ability to track just how *public* this art can be. Computer software can record anything from number of hits to points of access. This information can provide specific feedback concerning the impact of public art projects, allowing for much more accurate information on not only how the public responds to the work, but also who the public audience is.

By downloading the Google Earth plug-in, any *Vectorial Elevation* participant can view the 3-D maps for tracking search light locations and developing designs. Participants may chose from a range of searchlights as well as decide on the height of the light projections and shape the lights will make. The participant can view the design from multiple vantage points using the online digital camera. Lozano-Hemmer's work allows the process of a digital language to overcome its site-specific and technologically-based roots. After submitting designs, participants could then watch for their names (or whatever other identifying information they choose to add to their webpage) to appear on the constantly updating queue. With the ability to watch their designs in person or on the streaming view, Lozano-Hemmer ensured that one did not have to *be there* to interact with the physical location. The artist maintains, "With a 15 km visibility radius, the installation intended to blend the virtual space of the Internet with one of the most

[85] The Zapatista Movement in Chipas, Mexico is a grassroots and ethnic social resistance to the homogenizing powers of global capital reinforced by state powers. For a more detailed explanation, see Richard Stahler-Sholk, "Resisting Neoliberal Homogenization: The Zapatista Autonomy Movement," *Latin American Perspectives* 34 (2007), 48-63.
[86] Raphael Lozano-Hemmer, http://www.lozano-hemmer.com/.

emblematic public spaces in Vancouver."[87] *Vectorial Elevation* exemplifies the understanding that one can impact real space through the interactions with virtual space.

The illumination and utilization of the interplay between physical space and virtual space is one of the mechanisms that encourage continued participation and interaction with the work. Taking the time to create a design that would be realized in a real public space (and in 2010 as part of the Olympic Games) forms part of a series of interactions, rather than a one time visit. Light sculpture designers were given their own web pages, giving each participant an identity. No longer anonymous, participants could take responsibility for their interactions with the work. "Despite the monumental size of the installation and its wide visibility, the project is not intended as a cathartic pre-programmed spectacle like a fireworks display or a son-et-lumière show. On the contrary, the piece is designed to attract constant, personal participation that creates a sense of connection, complicity, and entitlement."[88] Lozano-Hemmer awards any potential audience member the right to interact, create, and assign individual meaning to his/her creation. Agency is derived from the voluntary community as the artist provides a platform for interactions and makes his trace invisible, replaced by the designs of the international community. The project website is maintained, and visitors can continue to track works by entering locations, names, or other codes to locate and browse through the individual designs. With the reproductive capabilities of computer programs, this project can continue to be installed in places that have access to the search light technology and equipment.[89]

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[87] Raphael Lozano-Hemmer, http://www.vectorialvancouver.net/concept.html.

[88] Raphael Lozano-Hemmer, http://www.vectorialvancouver.net/concept.html.

[89] Olympic organizations including the City of Vancouver's Olympic and Paralympics Public Art Program and Vancouver's 2010 Cultural Olympiad funded the most recent exhibition of *Vectorial Elevation*. While this seems like a somewhat limiting element, confining the project to only those places that have the means to fund such a project, the ability for potentially any person with access to the Internet to participate in the work expresses the inclusive, global, and collaborative platform is necessary in order to fight the homogenization and anonymity globalization brings with it.

IV. Technological Activism: Olympia-Rafah Solidarity Mural Project (ORSMP):

The media is invoked daily to thwart our perceptions and reactions to international events. We base our opinions and our loyalties on the images and accounts technology *allows* us to experience. Controlled by the globalized capitalistic forces that colonize the minds of the world with biased information, every time we turn on the television, read news websites, and pick up a paper, we are confronted by a world of current events that only exist to us in their mediation rather than their reality. This is the danger of technology. Its presentation can transform our sentiments and processes of engagement from unknown, inaccurate, and weighted sources. Technology allows for the freedom to identify with, support, and fight against people, places, and ideologies we have not experienced for ourselves. The ORSMP illuminates the dangers of technology in its ability to further divide the world masked by the celebration of transnational access (Figure 14).[90] Co-created by Susan Greene, Jewish-American artist and co-founder of Break the Silence Mural Project,[91] the Freedom Archives,[92] and Sam Stoller's technological design to allow for digital collaboration, the ORSMP combines the

[90] This public art project, a combination of a Web-based platform and a site-specific mural in Olympia, Washington provides a significant example of how site-specific art projects can gather international support and participation. The 100-foot mural lines the Labor Temple Building on the corner of State and Capitol in Olympia, Washington was unveiled in May 2010 with a public ceremony. Rather than looking to a singular past, the Olympia-Rafah Solidarity Mural Project solidifies and continues to build a transnational community between two cities "linked through tragedy and resilience." "Olympia-Rafah Solidarity Mural Project," http://olympiarafahmural.org/about-us/mission-goals/ (accessed 3 Jan. 2011). However, it is not in the past that this public art project lies, but in what the transnational community can do to make international instances of suffering end.

[91] Break the Silence Mural Project originally formed during the 1989 Intifada to create awareness about the situation in Palestine. Commissioned by Ramallah (West Bank) to help paint community murals with Palestinians, Miranda Bergman, Susan Greene, Dina Redman, and Marlene Tobias, four Jewish-American artists, began this organization while living in refugee camps with other Palestinians for three months. This program has continued to organize and fund mural projects in refugee camps and around the United States. Combining murals with videos, websites, classes, and discussions, Break the Silence is concerned with the relaying of information over the Palestinian situation to American universities, schools, and communities.

[92] Freedom Archives is an organization based out of San Francisco that archives solidarity movements from the 1960's through the 1990's. Accessible through the website's searchable database, Freedom Archives has also collaborated in the design for *La Lucha Continua/The Struggle Continues*, a talking mural in San Francisco.

site-specific mural and the online platform into an expansive transnational network.[93] While each sponsoring organization is distinct, they all share a common devotion to Palestine and are committed to offering support and creating awareness of the injustices performed at the cost of so many Palestinians. Inherently activist in its obvious weight towards a pro-Palestinian political proclivity, the ease of becoming involved in the project due to the online platform seems to make the political bent subtler.[94]

The death of Olympia resident Rachel Corrie in Palestine in 2003 inspired the ORSMP as a means to provide a public memorial not only to Corrie, but also to those who have died fighting to end international injustice and suffering. Killed by an Israeli bulldozer in a militant attack against the refugee camp in Rafah, the twenty-three year old Corrie became a local hero and figurehead for those fighting for peace in conflict-stricken places throughout the world.

> This multi-media project builds relationships across movements, issues, cultures, and great distances. It honors those who have lost their lives striving for liberation, and seeks to strengthen and make more visible the efforts of some of the many organizations and individuals who work for justice and dare to imagine a different world...The mural tells the tale of two cities linked through tragedy and resilience.[95]

In her now published journals and emails from Palestine, many of which can be found on the Rachel Corrie Foundation's website, Corrie humanizes the faceless Palestinian victims of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict. An excerpt from an email Corrie wrote to her mother reads, "I should at least mention that I am also discovering a degree of strength and of basic ability for

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[93] Sponsored by the Rachel Corrie Foundation for Peace and Justice and Break the Silence Arts Project'; co-sponsored by the Gaza Community Mental Health Programme, the International Trauma Treatment Program, and the Middle East Children's Alliance.

[94] While much of the content of the mural is geared towards the Palestinian situation in Gaza and the West Bank, the ultimate representation of a solidarity tree designed by over one hundred and fifty local, national, and international artists and organizations expands the project's meaning to incorporate the struggles in places other than Palestine such as Tel-Aviv, Derry, the United States, and Mexico. The project instigates a community bound by the shared experience of suffering, and the ORSMP provides a public platform for a transnational community encouraged through verbal, visual, and digital interaction across national borders.

[95] "A Tale of Two Cities~ The Olympia-Rafah Solidarity Mural Project-The Legacy of Rachel Corrie," 23 Apr. 2010, http://breakthesilencearts.org/ (accessed 4 Jan. 2011).

humans to remain human in the direst of circumstances-which I also haven't seen before. I think the word is dignity. I wish you could meet these people. Maybe, hopefully, someday you will."[96] Corrie's words reflect the humanizing aspect the mural helps to sustain. The site of the conflict is so distanced from the site of the mural that Corrie and her publicized experience in Palestine essentially bring the war 'home'. Access to the transnational community, therefore, is routed through the tragedy and hope the life of Rachel Corrie sparked as well as the publicization of her personal story online.[97]

While tragedy provides the mechanism that forms the transnational community, it is the utilization of digital technologies that publicizes *the cause*. The digital counterpart enables the project to be interactive among international populations, accessible to anyone outside of Olympia with access to a telephone and/or a computer and available through the project's website. Each leaf that makes up the visualized and metaphorical solidarity tree is encoded with an extension number, and in order to hear more about each leaf, visitors and participants can dial a number and listen to information about images and sponsoring organizations that interest them.[98] At the present moment, the online platform offers a running list of participating institutions and artists, and by clicking one from the list, the website takes you to a singular, detailed image of the leaf and text written by the organization. Links to the blog that allow for comments, discussion groups, and other projects sponsored by the Rachel Corrie Foundation and Break the Silence Mural Project can easily be

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[96] Rachel Corrie, Rachel Corrie Foundation for Peace and Justice, http://rachelcorriefoundation.org/rachel (accessed 4 Jan. 2011).

[97] Creating solidarity through the and 'publicization' of tragedy poses the question as to whether this project would have gained local interest and support without the death of, for lack of a better set of words, 'one of their own'. In other words, the ORSMP goes beyond encouraging empathy for Rachel Corrie and those suffering in Palestine to suggest that Palestinian suffering can be understood or translated into universal experience of suffering. This corresponds to Bourriaud's conception of translation as key to understanding signs and symbols from another culture. In this way, non-Palestinians can experience Palestinian suffering through tapping into their own, similar experience. Yet without belittling the death of Corrie, we must question how the suffering of one individual can allude to the historic suffering of an entire national, cultural, and religious population.

[98] Although the audio program is still under construction, the audio version will present viewers with poetry, stories, descriptive data, or music that leaf-creators have offered along with their designs.

navigated along with links to pages where a visitor can donate money and watch videos of the project's progress. Yet while the project's interdisciplinary site-specific and web-based platform allows for global interactions and exchange, the ultimate bent of the project in creating solidarity for Palestine should not be overlooked.

Many leaves utilize the transnational space of the mural to picture and solicit support for organizations that have found creative ways to encourage solidarity in favor of Palestinian freedom. In a panel discussion open to the public in Olympia, many questioned whether the ORSMP is 'taking sides in the conflict' because of the many references towards supporting Palestine. Although the organization denies the practice of taking sides, the ORSMP spokesperson claims, "The United States shares a deep friendship with Israel. ORSMP seeks a friendship with Palestinians, as well." However, participants who have either sponsored or participated in the project support more politically inclined organizations that incorporate diverse methods of public activism *against* Israel.[99]

The meaning and function of the ORSMP transforms when it branches from its memorial status into a public endorsement of organizations meant to cause harm to Israel and its economy as the multidisciplinary mural runs the risk of reinforcing the barrier and encouraging hostility

[99] Numerous leaves portray the work of pro-Boycott organizations such as the Boycott Campaign based out of San Francisco that incorporates their logo "End Apartheid, Boycott Israeli Goods" on their leaf that envisions a hand breaking through a barcode. On July 10, 2010, Olympian members of the Food Co-Op Board made the decision to participate in the internationally recognized movement for boycotting Israeli goods to invoke international pressure to end Apartheid politics. In an online article from *Frontlines Revolutionary Struggle* a reporter writes, "The Olympia Food-Co-Op Board of directors has decided to boycott Israeli goods at their two locations in Olympia, Washington. At a July 15th meeting packed with Co-op members, the Board reached this consensus. The Co-op becomes the first US grocery store to publicly join the international grassroots movement for boycott, divestment, and sanctions (BDS) on Israel for its human rights abuses," "Olympia, Washington Food Co-op removes Israeli goods from shelves; first U.S. store to institute boycott."*Frontlines Revolutionary Struggle*, 27 June 2010, http://revolutionaryfrontlines.wordpress.com/2010/07/page/2/ (accessed 4 Jan. 2011).
While Olympians have seemingly embraced the Palestinian cause, they have targeted Israelis and the Israeli economy to encourage relinquishment of control over occupied territories. But while this support will help to strengthen ties between Olympia and Rafah, it seems likely that this will prove harmful to ties with Israel or Israeli-supporters. Eliana Stockwell-Ferber claims that the decision to boycott Israeli goods will "further serve to polarize our community, " Rolf Boone, "Food co-op band stirs protest," *The Olympian*, 23 July 2010, http://www.theolympian.com/2010/07/23/1313232/food-co-op-ban-stirs-protest.html, (accessed 4 Jan. 2011).

between Israel and Palestine and their subsequent supporters. The mural does not seem to encourage solidarity between Olympia and Israel. The transnational community, therefore, is built on the common experience of support for Palestine rather than Israel.

If this project is meant to encourage peace and solidarity, why align with organizations that inflict harm on Israeli citizens who are non-combatants in the conflict? The mural is limited to the experiences of Palestinian or Palestinian-like suffering. But what about Israelis who have suffered from Palestinian attacks? Along with this omission, the ORSMP completely evades any mention of the Jewish Diaspora[100] while giving total weight to the current Palestinian Diaspora. Transnational in the sense that the mural defies national and cultural borders, the ORSMP also brings to light the reality that transnationalism does not imply a lack of borders. Instead, as some dissolve, others are strengthened or remain in place. Part of this problem stems from the use of the project's online platform to provide links only to other sites that support or are in line with the OSRMP's mission and the mission of other pro-Palestinian organizations. The lack of transparency in locating concerns and objections illuminates the agenda this project fuels without leaving room for contention. While it is without a doubt technology that provides the platform for transnational collaboration, the directors of this project have limited the expansive capabilities of the community only to those who have essentially *picked the same side*.

Rachel Corrie provides Olympians the capability for connecting with a type of loss that many will never experience. Although visually speaking about the injustices in Palestine, the ORSMP avoids the post-colonial dilemma of speaking for the 'other' as the utilization of digital technology allows for those involved to *speak* and/or *present* their own stories and images. Susan

[100] The Jewish Diaspora is considered the original and historic example of Diasporas today. However, the eventual establishment of the Israeli nation problematizes the continual description of Jews as diasporic. For a more in depth discussion, see Helena Schulz, *The Palestinian Diaspora: Formation of Identities and Politics of Homeland* (London and New York: Routledge, 2003), 8.

Greene, project director, notes her enthusiasm for new technologies that allow for a first person narrative as she describes the exchange between such great distances. "It was very exciting to include electronically-provided images from Gaza school-age children alongside art by Olympian school-age children. We were able to use technology to include images and ideas from those in another part of the world who couldn't come to Olympia and work on the mural."[101] Yet the transnational aspect of this project also presents a homogenizing factor in which all that participate essentialize themselves as peripheral and marginalized *like the Palestinians*. Why connect the struggle for Mexican-American immigrants trying to cross the border and the discrimination of Catholics in Northern Ireland to displaced Palestinians fighting for survival today? Transnationalism in the instance of the ORSMP is a powerful tool that can essentially help to alter the outcome of international conflicts. It can elicit not only local but global support using digital mechanisms to project the site-specific mural to a potentially global audience. The power of the online platform, however, remains in the manipulative presentation of the mural as a solidarity effort rather than as a pro-Palestine effort. The community that forms sustains its relationship through continued support, involvement, and interaction, but the border between the communities the OSRMP creates around itself in its political function is reinforced. The ORSMP does not utilize technology as a democratizing platform of public space, as it hinders the ability for community tensions to surface. Rosalyn Deutsche maintains, "Democratic public space might, rather, be called a phantom because while it appears, it has no substantive identity, and is, as a consequence, enigmatic. It emerges when society is instituted as a society with no basis...With this mutation, the unity of society becomes purely social and susceptible to contestation."[102] By quelling the contestation the ORSMP surely could have encouraged had

[101] "Olympia-Rafah Solidarity Mural Project," http://olympiarafahmural.org/.
[102] Deutsche, 324.

technological control been relinquished, developers of the project effectively squandered an attempt at democratic public art in the ironic goal to instigate freedom and democracy in the Middle East.

Yet avoiding the dilemma of twentieth-century community empowerment projects, the ORSMP forms a new community that essentially brings together the center and periphery through its focus on the future rather than the past. Perhaps the major downfall of the ORSMP, however, is that it looks to a tragic past in order to forge ahead for a hopeful future. Perhaps the concept of looking forwards rather than into the past may help us to escape the dilemma of re-establishing boundaries even within expansive and transnational communities. Moving towards a common goal and forming communities based on these goals will help to expand the map even further. As unfamiliar cultures now have better opportunities than ever before to come into contact with one another, this time should be spent not only talking about differences, but also talking about similarities. While the post-colonial era has prized difference to the point of cultural commodification, perhaps looking for a commonality, as the ORSMP promotes, might be a more beneficial route into more democratic globalized world. Bourriaud's question 'Where should we go?' therefore, is pivotal to the success of public art projects meant to create and sustain transnational communities.

V. Maintenance and Sustainability:

Questions of maintenance and sustainability remain important factors for the development of technologically-based public art projects, and like those that exist for most commissioned art projects that occupy physical space, technologically-supported projects also necessitate the need for these forward looking plans. Contemporary critic Steve Dietz calls

attention to the lack of sustainability for technologically-enhanced projects as new media today is so fleeting that the software used to create these works would have to be updated, replaced, or transformed in order to be maintained. Also lacking the assurance that no technological problems would arise with the projection of the work, the transitory and somewhat unstable characteristic of these projects represent the fleeting state of technology today and the issues concerning new media sustainability.

Dietz writes more specifically about the problem with maintenance plans concerning new media works. While many of these works do have maintenance plans, the technology used in maintenance are not knowingly sustainable. Dietz writes, "To be fair, every project I heard about had a plan for maintenance. There just isn't much experience to go by. Eventually we will know that a computer in a reasonably protected environment can last x years, an LCD screen needs to be replaced every y months, and we'll plan accordingly."[103] We must question whether completely technology-based public art projects are worth the funding if their futures cannot be confirmed by the artist. While it will take more time to evaluate the sustainability of public art projects that utilize new media technologies, it seems that the projects that support communities that exist in real and virtual space have the potential to outlast the technology that supports them.

Globalization's effective increase in accessibility to interactive technologies has of course created new forms of public art that defy the more traditional and confining elements of cultural, ethnic, and national identities by creating platforms for international interactions and community formations. The projects that are most successful are those that sustain communities, even when engaging participants from across the globe. It is difficult to locate platforms for continual dialogue, as the unfixed nature of identity within these transnational networks is less predicated on a pre-established collective identity, but a number of public artists are able to develop this

[103] Steve Dietz, "Interactive Publics," *Public Art Review* 15 (2003), 28.

platform through encouraging participants to take responsibility for the ultimate result of the work. Those that use an online component to create a community that is sustained in both virtual and real space is difficult, but paradoxically, it is the technology that has made this type of project feasible. We must continue to be wary, however, of how the excitement around technology can oftentimes skew what types of relationships are actually being created.

Collective identity remains the glue that holds these successful communities together. An element of identity that allows for the viewer/participant to become involved with the project on a level deeper than the aesthetic surface is needed in order to maintain communities in real and virtual space. While the Internet and language of technology can aid in the translation of meanings and significance to unfamiliar audience members, there must be a mechanism that calls for continued exchange in order for the project to continue and instigate a social transformation.

Chapter 3: Local Versus Global: Ecology and the Land

I. The Ecology of the Local:

Lucy Lippard describes the 'lure of the local' as a type of multi-centeredness in which one feels responsible for the place he inhabits in the present, creating multiple centers that transform alongside the movement of the subject. While Lippard's scholarship focuses a great deal on the relationship between people, landscape, and community, she sees this multi-centeredness as a way to relate and belong to cultures and places that might not be what one considers his/her 'own'. Current location can alter one's momentary identity, allowing for community formation that is devoted to a relationship with the inhabited physical place. This 'lure of the local'[104] allows for the continued presence and importance of the physical site in the globalizing world and also allows for transformative identities based on where a person is at present. If identity is a process of becoming in relation to where one is at the present, this suggests that one has flexibility in identifying as a local. Belonging, community, and responsibility, therefore, become questions of the current locale, disentangled from a cultural or historical tie to the land. However, as Eileen Woods understands it, our local practices are unavoidably influenced by the affects of globalization.

> When thinking of the physical spaces that mark our communities, the same predicament applies, and the role of the arts in our parks and open spaces in urban, suburban, and rural locations, should be considered as a local issue affected by international influences. Parks are places for discovery, play, and imagination, and while the natural world can be our one common experience, regardless of geographical location, how we are conditioned to respond to this experience is not always common.[105]

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[104] Refers to Lippard's publication.
[105] Eileen Woods, "The Art of Common Space," *Public Art Review* 19 (2007), 56.

The meaning of locality has changed. The imposition of global forces on local communities has threatened the continued importance of the latter. New challenges have arisen, as being local no longer always signifies a privileged position.

How exactly do locality and globality interact? Hou Hanru reflects on the new form of locality and its effects on the art world.

> It has become increasingly evident in today's globalized world that it is impossible to talk about the question of locality without the relating it to globality. Historically and especially in the contemporary world, locality is always a product of the confrontation and negotiation of the local (or the neighborhood) with the global (or "Other"). This vital and intense process of self-reflection, autocritique, and self-innovation allows the individual to continue to survive and obtain meaning within global modernization.[106]

Local actions become microscopic transformations within the global world, and while some actions aid in a beneficial manner, globalization and the move to physically expand the imperialist efforts of capitalistic endeavors have become harmful to localities that have remained entrenched in the physical presence of the site. Reinforcing the cultural and historical heritage of a specific locality becomes a means to fight against this tendency. Land is the element that unites us into one global community and divides us into national, regional, and local communities.

Public artists use the environment as the factor that unites the local and international community into a process of engagement with the goal of working towards a more aware, participatory, and environmentally conscious public. While first-world cities and nations might have the means to produce highly technical and large-scale endeavors to create an environmentally aware community, it does not take excessively funded urban interventions to create durable projects that address local, regional, and transnational audiences. While the borders around the proto typical nation-state might be in the process of a slow dissolution, the persistence of identity and nationality based on one's inhabitance of the land is still very much a

[106] Hanru, 58.

reality. While people are mobile, land is not; therefore, public art projects concerning the land can act as mediators between regional, trans-national, and global communities.

II. Joseph Beuys and His Eco-Art Legacy:

By the 1970s, an ecologically-concerned art form emerged with Joseph Beuys as one of its earliest proponents. An artist known for his devotion to social, political, and ecological issues outside of the museum or gallery, he began ecologically driven initiatives in the 1970's in the form of public demonstrations and discussions. Counteracting the market-driven materialism that ultimately led to social, cultural, and environmentally destructive tendencies, Beuys employed a program of radical ecology as a means of offsetting the larger pressures of capitalistic growth. Beuys promoted art and social interaction as a means to instigate public awareness and community involvement for the benefit of the environment. Actively taking a stand against the encroachment of urbanization and capitalism on the environmental standards of urban spaces, Beuys' work utilized a form he coined 'social sculpture', concerned with the democratic capabilities of art. In his article "I am Searching for a Field Character," Beuys writes, "The most modern art discipline-Social Sculpture/Social Architecture- will only reach fruition when every living person becomes a creator, a sculptor, or architect of the social organism."[107] Describing Beuys' approach to radical ecology, David Adams writes:

> ...he also undertook searching explorations of how artistic creation can directly convey the existential attitudes of a more profound understanding of natural ecological relationships, and how an expanded conception of art can tackle even the social, economic, and political reorganization of Western society. He saw this as necessary to replace the ecology-destroying tendencies embodied in consumerism, patriarchy, statism, and capitalist growth.[108]

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[107] Joseph Beuys, "I Am Searching For Field Character," in *Art Into Society, Society Into Art*, trans. Caroline Tisdall (London: Institute of Contemporary Art, 1974), 48.
[108] David Adams, "Joseph Beuys: Pioneer of a Radical Ecology," *Art Journal* 51 (1992), 26.

In 1971, Beuys developed the project *Overcome Party Dictatorship Now* that culminated in an anti-deforestation project in which demonstrators swept the Düsseldorf forest floor and painted white crosses and rings on the trees planned for uprooting (Figure 15). Attempting to protect the trees from being uprooted and displaced from their natural ecological habitat, Beuys initiated an artistic movement to counteract this destruction of natural resources. In 1983, the artist developed the *Spü**elfeld Altenwerder* pilot project for the planting of trees and shrubs in the polluted flats of Hamburg in order to protect the groundwater.[109] More significantly, Beuys initiated a citywide program in which city council members, the city mayor, and public participants were able to continually meet to discuss the state of the city's ecological happenstance. He referred to this as part of a program for "energy dialogue"[110] in which art replaced the theoretical conceptions concerning relationships within the world. While these projects utilized an art context to influence the public's ecological awareness, they transformed the earth locally. In part a reaction to the growing capitalism and urbanization overrunning the state of natural environment in urban spaces, Beuys' projects encouraged community interaction amongst participants and with the environment in order to sculpt the present and take responsibility for the future through hands-on social and political action. Literally resisting the encroaching pollution on urban spaces, the metaphorical utilization of tree planting expressed what Beuys considered a pollution of the interior. "Environmental pollution advances parallel with a pollution of the world within us."[111]

Beuys developed *7,000 Eichen (7,000 Oaks)*, a five-year effort to plant a variety of oak trees throughout Kassel, Germany, inaugurated at the 1982 *Documenta 7* (Figure 16) and

[109] The shrubs were meant to help "bind toxic substances in the soil and protect the groundwater." Adams, 27.
[110] Adams, 26.
[111] Collaboration between Beuys and pet Henirch Böll in 1972 principles for Free International University. See Adams, 28.

eventually finalized at the 1987 Documenta with Beuys' son planting the last tree. Initially, Beuys wanted the funding for the project to come directly from the community, as each participant paid for and planted an individual tree. Unfortunately, this funding platform could not be sustained, and the Dia Art Foundation funded the project initially with the help of individual tree sponsorships, private artist donations, and Beuys himself.[112] Beside each tree, collaborators placed short basalt steles, creating a juxtaposition between the permanence of the stone and the constantly shifting tree. "The solid stone form beside the ever-changing tree symbolically represents a basic concept in Beuys' philosophy, that these two natural and yet oppositional qualities are complementary and coexist harmoniously."[113] Community members were involved with both the planning of where to plant the trees, the discussions surrounding how this would affect future generations, and the actual planting. The juxtaposition between the constantly growing tree and the permanence of monument embeds the context of the project in historical time while also allowing for continued transformation in the future.

Besides the beneficial ecological impact trees provide, they also weave nature into the cityscape. They are the result of community collaboration, and their presence inevitably affects the future community impacted by the trees. The UK's RSA Arts and Ecology blog states, "It [*7,000 Oaks*] speaks to both individual and local action-in Kassel as a gesture towards urban development, as well as a monumental, universal, and propagating initiative to effect environmental and social change in a global scale."[114] *7,000 Oaks* has also had a lasting international impact as other institutions, cities, and organizations have instigated similar

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[112] "Joseph Beuys: 7,000 Oaks," Dia Foundation, http://www.diacenter.org/sites/page/51/1295 (accessed 17 Feb. 2011).
[113] The basalt was quarried near Kassel and placed in a heap outside of *Documenta's* main exhibition building, the Fridericianum. "Walker Art Center's Tree-Planting Project," Walker Art Center, http://www.walkerart.org/archive/9/A143E5F68AFD50EC6177.htm (accessed 21 Feb. 2011).
[114] "Joseph Beuys: 7000 Oaks. Land art meets urban renewal," *RSA Arts and Ecology*, http://www.artsandecology.org.uk/magazine/artworks/project-6 (accessed 21 Feb. 2011).

projects elsewhere. Lynne Cooke of the Dia Arts Foundation writes, "*7,000 Oaks* is characteristic of this German artist in that it could both function as a small-scale, intimate project, the outcome of individual initiative, as well as a highly ambitious, potentially vast undertaking meant to be replicated elsewhere."[115]

One *7,000 Oaks* replication process took place through the Walker Art Center with the help of curator Todd Bockley in 1997. Rather than responding to the surrounding local landscape around the museum, the institution chose Cass Lake, a reservation town in Northern Minnesota, as the site for their implementation of *7,000 Oaks*. Bockley made multiple trips to Cass Lake in order to gather community input concerning the planting of the trees "to assure that the project "grew" in a way that was determined by the needs and personality of the community itself."[116] The Walker Art Center continued to help plant trees at the Reservation's elementary school and has provided transportation for Reservation community members to travel to the museum and attend exhibitions and discussions, fostering a continuing relationship between the institution and the Reservation through lectures that link Beuys' work with Native American traditions.[117] An interdisciplinary approach to public art, life, science, and social interaction, Beuys' *7,000 Oaks* and projects modeled after it instigate collaboration, collective action, and engagement between the community members, the land, and through space and time. Although Beuys' public art projects were meant to counter institutional power, it is important to note that it is an institution that funded his works and the works modeled after them. The attempt to thwart the power of the

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[115] Lynne Cooke, "7,000 Oaks. Land art meets urban renewal," Dia Art Foundation, http://www.diaart.org/sites/page/51/1295 (accessed 18 Feb. 2011). Dia Art Foundation has continued to fund the planting of trees outside of the organization's exhibition space in New York City and has also helped Sydney and Oslo implement their own *7,000 Oaks*.

[116] Walker Art Center's Tree-Planting Project, Walker Art Center.

[117] In another tier of Walker Art Center's project, Bockley brought Beuys' ideas and work to a St. Paul high school classroom, and for final element of the work, a single tree and basalt statue were placed in the Minneapolis Sculpture Garden. With the help of the museum's Teen Program, young community members helped in the planning and planting as part of the Walker's Free First Saturday Program in which members of the Cass Lake community members were encouraged to attend.

democratic process is essentially frustrated when these works only become feasible by the institution's recognition and envelopment of their cause and theme. Yet we must question whether the institution's involvement, in these cases, is detrimental to the integrity of the project. It seems, however, that the environmental and community benefits outweigh the sometimes-detrimental effects institutional implementations in local communities can have when the community is not given control over the project.[118]

Many significant projects have emerged from Beuys' meddling between art, ecology, and activism, as contemporary public artists have used issues concerning the global environment to design projects meant for collaboration among local community members. Global warming, pollution, growing urban sprawl...all of these are concerns for the global public, yet we only experience issues concerned with the environment through our local, individual experience. We are aware of the global dilemma, but we only truly understand it through our locality. Therefore, in order to affect and transform the global community, artists must begin with the local. Susan Leibovitz Steinman, a well-known ecologically driven public artist writes, "Individually, artists cannot change deep-seeded economic and ecological problems with their artworks. What they can accomplish is to help local communities visualize change, and that vision can empower them to work toward a more positive future."[119]

In 2006, artist Lee Simmons, with the help of community Fire, Search, and Rescue team, developed *Quarry: 2* in Surrey, England (Figure 17).[120] In order to address the issues with Betchworth Quarry, a 'highly visible' chalk quarry turned landfill possibly contaminating the city's drinking water, Simmons and the firefighters spray-painted the face of the landfill with

[118] See discussion of *Culture in Action* in Chapter One.
[119] Susan Leibovitz Steinman, "Green Art: Green Cities," Greenmuseum, http://www.greenmuseum.org/generic_content.php?ct_id=229 (accessed 3 Mar. 2011).
[120] This project was commissioned by the Arts Council England South East and Surrey County Arts.

brightly-colored water-soluble, non-toxic children's powder paint. They also painted sheep set to graze for the three-day event in the midst of the spray-painted rock to refer to the use of chemicals in wool marking. Passers-by and community members interacted with the land as they travelled to the outlying landscape surrounding Surrey to the landfill site where Simmons had arranged community and regional tours. Calling attention to the unsustainable practice of landfills. Simmons used public art as a means to call attention to global environmental problems through visualizing the problems within the local landscape.[121]

Projects considered those that *look forward* are ones that construct projects that will beneficially transform the public in the future. Participants in these projects take on a responsibility not only for the present community, but also for the future community. Many of Slovenian-born Marjetica Potrč's on-site collaboration projects use environmental issues as platforms for addressing the community-building aspects necessary for survival in the twenty-first century. In her recent 2010 project located in Anyang, South Korea, she helped develop *A Rooftop Rice Field at Byuri School.* The artist constructed a water tank to collect rainwater used to irrigate the rooftop rice field. Besides irrigation, the water recollected provides plumbing water for the upstairs floor of the school. Students participate in rice collection and the harvested rice is used to feed the students, thereby creating a self-sustained food supply for the school community. Created as a project meant to promote awareness about water re-use and localizing food production, Potrč's website states that citizens of Anyang hope that this project will help the municipal government provide free organic food to students in Anyang.[122]

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[121] Interestingly, this project also brought out questions of land ownership as Simmons discusses her transparent process and its failure to effectively publicize her plan for the site amongst the nearby inhabitants. For further discussion, see Lee Simmons website: http://www.publicartonline.org.uk/casestudies/temporary/quarry2/biography.php/.

[122] See Portč's website, http://www.potrc.org/project2.htm

While Beuys set the precedent for ecologically-centered public art to initiate community building and counteract the imposing forces of consumerism, the artist also expanded the nature of what public art could inherently entail. Blurring the boundary between science, social work, activism, and art, Beuys helped instigate a model for social interactions that could benefit the present and future communities inhabiting local space. With projects such as these mentioned above, present communities can have an impact on future communities, creating a durable interplay between present and future through the continued presence and transformation of the land. While these individual projects may not necessarily facilitate environmental soundness on a global level, local projects concerning the environment can instigate communities based on a shared experience of collectively inhabiting the local landscape and collaboratively attempting to reshape the local landscape using measures to protect ecological standards. These projects counteract the effects of globalization through local practices that are repeated in a variety of communities.

III. Local Projects as Global Platforms for Community-Building:

Besides the development of one local project that can be implemented in multiple international locations and contexts, public art projects can create local and global communities through the sharing and exchange over ideas for the use of public space. Public art may now enlist the help of transnational actors in the local transformations of the land, as the isolating nature of locality expands to allow for the responsibility a person feels towards the community one inhabits in the present.[123] While not all projects necessarily culminate in the realization of specific projects, the new interactions between local and global forces concerning issues of land

[123] Lucy Lippard, "People and Place: Why Ecology Matters," (lecture presented at the University of Colorado, Boulder, Colorado, January 20, 2011).

instigate sustainable international communities through the exchange of ideas, workshops, and dialogue through the sharing of local experiences. The local issue of land use becomes a microcosm for case studies concerning how to use the natural environment for the benefit of the public.

Agnes Denes describes her approach to ecological art as living murals: "My large-scale environmental works can be seen as murals that define the landscape. They are monumental by necessity and become landmarks that live and breathe with the land, giving it new purpose and meaning."[124] Denes' project *Tree Mountain-A Living Time Capsule-11,000 Trees, 11,000 People, 400 Years* (1992-1996) (Figure 18) ultimately became one of the "largest reclamation sites in the world and unprecedented in duration."[125] *Tree-Mountain* was commissioned at the 1992 Earth Summit[126] held in Rio de Janiero and funded by the Finnish Ministry of the Environment, the United Nations Environmental Program, and private donations. A culmination of ten years of research concerning the site, Denes' project necessitated an elevated landscape that came to a sharp point in the center.[127] Ultimately, the artist chose a Finnish site previously used for resource extraction in order to help undo the damage the company who used the site had inflicted:

> We selected a site that a company had used for resource extraction and was obligated to compensate for with some kind of restoration. Building a mountain out of refuse material the mine could no longer use became their payment for using the resources free of charge and destroying the land in the process. I took

[124] Agnes Denes, "Living Murals in the Land: Crossing the Boundaries of Time and Space," *Public Art Review* 17 (2005), 42.
[125] Denes, 45.
[126] The Earth Summit Conference was a United Nations conference held in Rio de Janiero June 3-14, 1992 concerned with principle themes of the environment and sustainable development.
[127] Denes also wanted to avoid uprooting existing trees to develop her own project. See Denes, 45. This brings me to question the choice of location for the project. The choice of Finland for the site of the project is a result of the artist's decision to find a reclamation site and funding made possibly by the Finnish government and the corporation responsible for the state of the site.

> the blank canvas-the naked, destroyed land-and built a mural on it, a process that took four a half years.[128]

Culminating in a 420-meter long, 270-meter wide geometric pattern of seedlings, the planted ovular landscape transformed the ecological landscape as eleven thousand participants from all over the world travelled to Finland to take part in the tree-planting project. Each participant was given documents that named him/her as custodian of the tree, archiving the process of planting and creating a global community linked through their collaboration with the site. In the words of the artist:

> *Tree Mountain* involved people from around the globe, a community that will become millions through the centuries, connected by their trees...A natural mural began its life as ten-inch seedlings of Finnish pine entered the newly formed ground to begin their journey of becoming 100-foot trees in a mathematical forest. *Tree Mountain* is a protected national forest today.[129]

A successful example of a transnational public art project meant to encourage global environmentalism, the culmination of the project within a local context provides an exemplary model showing how locality can be synonymous with a responsibility towards the location one inhabits in the present and how transnational communities can form and last through their transformation of a particular locale.

In 2004, London opened Gunpowder Park, a now public open space that was once a closed munitions testing site (Figure 19). Located in the northern part of the city, amidst the many peripheral communities and inhabitants of that area, the public art project has provided space for a multicultural community to form based on shared desire to take advantage of recreational outdoor spaces that supply amenities for people of all ages and backgrounds. Utilizing an interdisciplinary approach that combines knowledge concerning the arts, science, nature, and urban planning into the culmination of a 220-acre public space, Gunpowder Park has instigated not only interdisciplinary dialogue, but also an international dialogue that has helped

[128] Denes, 45.
[129] Denes, 45.

organizations in numerous other countries develop public art projects and designs meant to enhance community-building strategies, provide the population with more natural surroundings amidst the urbanization of the cities, and protect certain areas of the environmental landscape from increased commercialization and urban sprawl. Funded and run by the Landscape + Arts Network Services (LANS) and the Lee Valley Regional Park Authority,[130] professionals from different educational backgrounds and across international borders helped to conceive the development of the park. Collaborators see the use of the park as a cultural and artistic common space, promoted as a means for encouraging a democratic space in which all different members of society can create, be heard, and be seen in public spaces.

> Gunpowder Park's heritage of experimentation has from the outset informed the creative policy: to explore the meaning and use of open space in our society through research, arts-led collaborations, education, events and publishing; in essence, to create, through the exchange of ideas. Today, creative professionals enjoy unprecedented conceptual and physical freedom to create work in the landscape of the park, supported by the arts producers, environmental specialists, and public-realm professionals who make up the LANS team. Shaping the future of democratic common space is the motivating creative force behind Gunpowder Park, where in this previously controlled space dedicated to perfecting weapons of destruction, these weapons were then employed to protect democracy and commonality.[131]

Besides the more obvious local community-building and inter-disciplinary approach to developing this specific park, LANS has been instrumental in using Gunpowder Park as a platform for the potential of open spaces throughout the world. Partnering with Robert Wilson of Long Island's Watermill Center and Benjamin Barber of New York's Demos organization, these collaborators along with the LANS team have continued to host workshops that address the needs for open spaces and types of interaction that take place within them. The major question addressed is how local spaces can be utilized for wider audiences where local experience might

[130] Multi-million pound investment from the Lee Valley Regional Park Authority.
[131] Woods, 56.

not be based on a specific national, cultural, or ethnic experience of the site. In diversified areas, how can common outdoor spaces help initiate communities? Out of these questions emerged *The Art of Common Space*, "a series of arts-led events, commissions, and debates, both live and virtual, that respond to the question: What is common space in our twenty-first century multicultural society?"[132] *The Art of Common Space* has continued international dialogue concerning the common space of the fragmented twenty-first century society and has utilized a democratic approach in which to successfully reach those outside the realm of the Westernized institution. While open space becomes a place where democracy can live outside the confines of the center-periphery power structure, the discussion concerning these open spaces also becomes a means for democratic international dialogue.

Workshops hosted in cities from Mexico City to Rotterdam have provided a model in which public art dialogue is linguistically, virtually, and contextually accessible, thereby adhering to the idea of common space as a democratic public rather than a space still defined by a hierarchy, be it a local social hierarchy, or an international hierarchy based on the continued power and presence of colonial powers.

> This process of engagement, successful in many ways, still influences engagement practices today, yet it lacks the evidence of sustainability and international perspective, partially as a reaction to the local perspectives. The Art of Common Space, with Gunpowder Park as its experimental base, continues this historical notion of dialogue, but creates common space of communication which reaches beyond a transatlantic locality to illuminate the most pertinent concerns of open and natural spaces through the creative exchange of ideas.[133]

While of course these discussions do not always manifest in the creation of a public park or open space in the cities of those involved in the dialogue, the discussions and workshops can continue as the sustainable community, the result of Gunpowder Park. Projects that begin as local

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[132] Woods, 57.
[133] Woods, 57.

endeavors affect global communities, and in this instance, the two entities become interwoven into one democratic global community devoted to the beneficial use and protection of the natural landscape in urban centers.

With only fifty parking spots, a trip to Gunpowder Park encourages taking public transportation (located near a rail line), biking, or walking. The public restrooms use recycled rainwater from the car park. As a reclamation and regeneration site, Gunpowder Park also points to the combination of arts and sciences to reinvigorate the site through creative meetings, workshops, and programs that are publicized on park calendars and on the park website. Divided into four bioregions, the park Cob Fields (Shock Waves Gallery), Cob Meadows (Blast Mountain Plateau), Osier March (The Salix), and Cob Field (The Energy Field) house earthworks, native plants and flowers, agricultural regeneration projects, and gathering or meeting areas designed to encourage visitor interaction. Wildflowers chosen for the fields and meadows change colors with the changing seasons while plants and shrubs dissect the meadows to resemble shock waves. The work of landscape architects, artists, and ecologists, Gunpowder Park is not only functional as an ecological reclamation site and a community gathering space, but it is the creative expression of the environment housed within the urban landscape.

The interaction between global and local forces concerning urban redevelopment and regeneration has also culminated in the introduction of international art exhibition formats to address global ecological concerns. *48 Degrees Celsius Public.Art.Ecology* (2010) is an ecologically themed public art exhibition that took place in New Delhi, India as a means for calling attention to the effects of global warming through the microcosm of the local Delhi community. Initiated, organized, and funded by Germany's Goethe-Institut/ Max Mueller

Bhavan, and GTZ,[134] over twenty-five international artists exhibited works throughout Delhi's public sphere. With a combination of projects ranging from sculpture, to video work, to public discussions amongst the public, ecologists, and artists, the interdisciplinary aspect of this work appealed to a public unified by their experience of the rising heat in the city. The locality of New Delhi provided an experimental platform that could be re-implemented in any other international city. However, the idea of targeting localities by non-local artists and sponsors poses the question as to whether Germany is merely imposing its nuanced green aesthetic on the less globalized New Delhi. Is *48 Degrees Celsius* considered an exhibition responding to the "local" only because it is site-specific to the city? Because the local community sited for the project is relatively uninvolved in the project, the exhibition seems more of a German imposition rather than a local, grassroots response to local circumstances.[135]

Works chosen for this exhibition provided a wide range of activities to encourage participation. Audiences could interact with works through their cell phones, as in Bombay Arts' *Dil Maange Mor.* This work called attention to the rapidly declining Mor (peacock) that inhabits Delhi and its surroundings as passers-by could dial a number and use the keypad to light up the LED peacock located on top of a popular juice stand in a busy thoroughfare in the city. After the peacock 'performed' for the audience, it gave a brief lecture concerning the reasons for the peacock's disappearance. "This project wants to instigate citizens into dwelling about the kind of urbanization they want to choose for themselves. The idea is to use the vocabulary of popular

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[134] GTZ is the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit, now part of the larger GIZ that formed in January of 2011 to "support people and societies in developing, transition and industrialised countries in shaping their own futures and improving living conditions...it brings together under one roof the long-standing expertise of the Deutscher Entwicklungsdienst (DED) gGmbH (German Development Service), the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ) GmbH (German technical cooperation) and Inwent-Capactiy Building International, Germany. As a federally owned enterprise, we support the German Government in achieving its objectives in the field of international cooperation for sustainable development. We are also engaged in international education and work around the globe." Giz : Deutsche Gesellschaft für Interionale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH, http://www.giz.de/en/profile.html (accessed 10 Mar. 2011).

[135] This will be addressed more fully towards the end of this subchapter.

culture to dialogue with the public."[136] Another project, *Crane + Tree*, designed by Indian artist Krishnaraj Chonat, commented on the deforestation of the Sandalwood forests, using a crane to hold an uprooted tree as a metaphor for conservation (Figure 20). The literal visualization of uprooting and the hope for replanting are evoked as the tree hovers over the ground. "Uprooting, dislocation, relocation, rehabilitation, resettlement, compensation: these terms are now inherent in any discourse of urban 'development', and function as the rhetorical axes upon which are plotted the points of conflict between the urban, semi-urban and rural sectors struggling for space as the city expands."[137] Haubitz + Zoche, an artist collaboration between Sabine Haubitz and Stefanie Zoche, designed a bamboo sculpture reminiscent of a watch tower that projected videos and images concerning the declining state of the Yamuna River. Immersing the viewer under the surface of the water, the artists take the audience into the invisible as "The video reveals a devastating degradation of the water quality as the river approaches Delhi making this common knowledge nearly physically experienceable for the spectators who gather around the projected water pond."

Drawing people in with appealing designs and providing creative platforms for initiating ecological awareness, projects like these utilized the alluring effects of technology. Pinpointing the local consequences of urban development and globalization, artists counteract these global forces by resisting them locally and by creating platforms for public dialogue and exchange to benefit their common experience and to illuminate the problems globalization has caused the city and the global landscape. The local provides the means for exploration of the global.

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[136] Haubitz + Zoche is the artist collective between Sabine Haubitz and Stefanie Zoche. Haubitz + Zoche is based out of Germany.

[137] "Krishnaraj Chonat," *Forty Eight Degrees Celcius: Public.Art.Ecology*, http://www.48c.org/krishna.html (accessed 13 Mar. 2011).

However, the lack of continued community interaction with the theme of urban regeneration and sustainability calls into question the feasibility of international exhibition platforms to inform and fill the needs of local ecological concerns. While projects drew in instantaneous passers-by, the lack of a continued platform for exchange reflects the notion that international artists chosen to provide works for local communities will eventually return back to their international homes. While non-local artists might effectively research the needs of local communities, environmental responsibility returns to the hands of the local public, and without a platform for continued dialogue and continued community building, the message the projects intended dissipate with the works. Perhaps this is to be expected because the project was generated by Germany rather than India, and the imposition of non-local artists, organizations, and goals on local situations and realities creates an unbridgeable disjuncture between the initiator and the audience.

The Art and Industry Biennial Trust has organized the SCAPE Biennial since 2006. Located in Christchurch, New Zealand, this public art exhibition invites international artists to immerse themselves in the history and heritage of Christchurch. Rebecca Coates writes, "With a renewed focus on the city of Christchurch as "both the site and subject for *SCAPE* 2010", this year the curatorial team has worked to address topics including cities of the future, urban growth, sustainability, and urban regeneration."[138] Funded by the Art & Industry Biennial Trust, assisted by partnerships,[139] SCAPE also chooses one artist to create a permanent work for the city amidst the number of temporary works that are part of the exhibition.

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[138] Rebecca Coates, "The Art of Art in Public Places," *Casca* 39.3 (2010), 177. *SCAPE* 2010, scheduled for March through April, was ultimately cancelled due to the effects of the devastating earthquake.

[139] The curators note, "The Trust undertakes to present public art assisted by partnerships, particularly with industry, as an inspiring and educational force," Zara Stanhope, Blair French, Julia Morrison, and William Field, "SCAPE 2010 A Dialogue on Art and Civic Space," *Contemporary Visual Art]+Culture Broadsheet* 29.3, 2010, 167.

> With a European sensibility and omission of any reference to bi-culturalism in these plans for the coming environment and the subjectivity of its inhabitation, it appears the critique of politics of urban space that was mobilized by cultural thinkers such as Rosalyn Deutsche and others more than a decade ago lost its currency. Local problematics of history, memory and cultural identity, as well as spatial and social relations in all their multiplicity offer plenty of substance for creative investigation in the public realm.[140]

The three main curators, Christchurch artist Julia Morrison, William Field, Christchurch landscape architect William Field, and one-time resident of Christchurch, curator Blair French, chose both the theme, 'Art and the City Centre: Prompting Discussion about our Urban Environment', and the artists to be involved in the exhibition. Interviewer Zara Stanhope responds to this commissioning process saying, "your proposal refocused attention on specifically local conditions within the context of shifting forms of urban life and space in neoliberal economies."[141] The intensified focus on the here, the now, and the current effects of globalization on urban spaces is reiterated through this choice of theme.

Yet how are international artists meant to interact with the specificities of Christchurch, perhaps never even visiting before the time of art installation or exhibition? The curators uphold that artists were given a 'dossier' to provide general background about the location, but is this enough to create a relationship between not only the work and the urban space and its meaning, but also the work and the Christchurch community? In other words, how specific to Christchurch can these projects be without the involvement of local communities who are inherently part of the local space? Blair French upholds the 'locality' of the project:

> With William and Julia's knowledge of Christchurch, both as a set of environments and living entity, coupled with specific planning imperatives being pursued, there's no doubt development of the project was informed by the particularities and current circumstances of the city...All that said, the issues we

[140] Stanhope, French, Morrison, and Field, 167.
[141] Stanhope in an interview with curators, Stanhope, French, Morrison, and Field, 167.

> point to regarding urban consolidation, redevelopment and sustainability are issues facing cities globally, inflected by the particularities of locality."[142]

While international artists may use their own experiences with the effects of globalization on local identities to reinforce the global nature of these concerns in local spaces, it is clear that the welcoming of international artists to address the needs of a local public is not always problem-free.

IV. The Tension between the Local and the Global, *The Wild Rice Project*:

The projects I have focused on previously assume a somewhat homogeneous public audience or community that inherently wants the same thing: ecological improvement. Being local is being defined by a collective desire to improve the standing of living over the shared space. The community created is aware of moving towards one common goal. But what happens when local communities are in contention? While the previous examples have focused on uniting the local and global communities into a common community based on one common goal, the *Wild Rice Project* looks to public art as a way to create cross-cultural or transnational discussion between the Anishinaabe[143] Indian Nation and the surrounding, non-Indian community in order to help protect and sustain Indian sovereignty. Up to this point, *trans*-nationalism or moving across nations, has worked under the assumption that nations are homogeneous entities. However, if we begin to deconstruct the term, it will show that the *nation* is merely a cultural, political, and powerful construct. "The personal attributes of different members of a nation-or, in

[142] Stanhope, French, Morrison, and Field, 168.
[143] Also known as Anishinaabeg or Anishinabek, autonym for the Ojibwe or Algonquin peoples.

other words the 'who' of the nation-ultimately complicate any comprehension we have of a nation as a homogeneous group of people."[144]

The *Wild Rice Project*, an intra-transnational public art project organized between the Anishinaabe Tribe and the nearby University of Minnesota, provides the platform necessary for discussing the possibility for transnationalism within one supposedly singular nation. As the transnational community is bound together by a shared sense of space and a devotion to harnessing or protecting the economic potential of wild rice production, the *Wild Rice Projec*t instigates the visibility and voice of 'nations within', as the project was generated collaboratively on the part of the American Indian community and the university. Locality and transnationality, two seemingly polarized terms, work together to blur the boundary between distinct communities while at the same time reinforcing the national rights of the sub-national community. While transnationalism has previously linked distant people and places, in this instance, a transnational community is rooted in a shared sense of space, a contestation over local meanings and practices, and the struggle to protect what economic, political, and cultural autonomy the Anishinaabe people have over their own federally-granted territory and control.

The local population surrounding the *Wild Rice Project* is in disagreement over control of access to land. The shared vernacular landscape, therefore, does not automatically produce a united community, but instead, provides a site of contention. Desire for control over the land, and more specifically, access to wild rice production, is what unites the transnational community. The land shared by contingent nations and the struggle for control over the agricultural production of the region threatens the sovereignty of the sub-national Anishinaabe while the potential for mapping the genome of the wild rice specific to the region would be beneficial to a

[144] Kip Jones, "A Biographic Researcher in Pursuit of an Aesthetic: The use of arts-based (re)presentations in "performative" dissemination of life stories," *Qualitative Sociology Review* 11 (2006), 67.

larger, non-Indian public. Wild rice could potentially transform from local treasure to national (in this instance 'national' refers to the larger U.S.) industry, thereby disempowering Anishinaabe economic independence.

After years of debate over research on the wild rice native to this specific part of Minnesota, Karl Lorenz, a professor at the University of Minnesota's Agricultural Department, formed a project meant to spark dialogue between the school and the Indian nation with the help of his class. The *Wild Rice Project* presents a very interesting case as Lorenz openly self-identifies and situates himself in the thirdspace as an artist who occupies a multicultural identity. Lorenz claims to be a descendant of both Germanic and American Indian origins. He is a member of the Lummi Nation and sees himself as able to cross the transnational and trans-cultural border between the center and the periphery. "In an increasingly globalized, postcolonial world," he writes, "artists who themselves understand hybridity-by virtue of birthright, biography or necessity-are uniquely positioned to ripen the emergent postcolonial qualities of public art through their own dialogic arts practice of evaluating the contesting dynamic narratives that broker the generation of unique meanings."[145]

Continued research on wild rice has made the Anishinaabe Nation vulnerable to losing its most important source of income and a crucial part of its cultural and national identity. While wild rice is a main staple of the Tribe's ecological economy, it also holds spiritual, traditional, and cultural significance within the community. Ultimately, it establishes the connection of the Anishinaabe to the land they inhabit.[146] Interaction with the land through traditional harvesting practices and economic

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[145] Margaret Adamek and Karl Lorenz, "Be a Crossroads: Public Art Practice and the Cultural Hybrid," in *The Practice of Public Art*, ed. Cameron Cartiere and Shelley Willis (New York: Routledge, 2008), 58-9. The question of the identity of the artist will be discussed later in this section.

[146] Communications between the school and the Indian Reservation became complicated in the 1960's as the university's research of the Tribe's foremost crop and economically viable export threatened the latter's control over the somewhat mysterious grain. Because of wild rice's specific and apparently difficult to uncover genetic make-up,

independence derived from the value of the unique grain reinforce the necessity as well as the prophecy of the Anishinaabe's existence as a nation.

> Still gathered today by hand in canoes from lakes and rivers, wild rice has not only been the primary staple food for Anishinaabe but is also central to their creation story. Wild rice is thus a sacred food-a gift from the Creator. The Anishinaabe are bound by prophecy to be guardians of *mahnomen*.[147] Wild rice is not just what they eat; it is the defining substance of their cultural identity as well as an autonomous being worthy of respect. It also protected by federal treaty law-binding legal agreements second only to Constitutional law between the United States government and sovereign native nations that preserve the inherent rights of tribal peoples exercised long before European settlers formed their own government.[148]

Wild rice, therefore, distinguishes this community, this culture, and this nation from the territory outside of it. Protected by federally recognized treaties as part of the nation's economic sovereignty, *mahnomen* is crucial to the survival of the Anishinaabe nation. Relative to cultural and political autonomy, the protection of wild rice is both an ecological and political concern.

Karl Lorenz designed the public art billboard, *Keep It Wild* (2006-2007), in collaboration with Anishinaabe Tribal members (Figure 21).[149] The billboard rose above the highway for three months from the parking lot of a Subway across from Wal-Mart on a highway crossing between the Lake Leech Reservation and Detroit Lakes, MN. Funded primarily by a grant from the Minnesota State Arts Board, the billboard made the nearby existence of the American Indian Nation public to a wider audience.

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scientists and researches have attempted to map the genome of this agricultural specimen, and in the process, have helped to cultivate a strain that has lessened the value of wild rice from the region and allowed it to be artificially produced. Peter Ritter writes, "As demand for wild rice grew, researchers at the U of M, funded by federal grants, began experimenting with "non-shattering" strains-rice that could easily be grown in paddies and harvested by machine," Peter Ritter, "A Rice by any Other Name," *City Beat* 21, 27 Sept. 2000, http://www.mindfully.org/GE/Rice-By-Any-Other-Name27sep00.htm (accessed 21 Oct. 2011).
Continued research on wild rice has made the Anishinaabe Nation vulnerable to losing its most important source of income and a crucial part of its cultural and national identity. While wild rice is a main staple of the Tribe's ecological economy (500,000 pounds harvested per year), it also holds spiritual, traditional, and cultural significance within the community, (Ritter, "A Rice by any Other Name.")

[147] Manhomen is the Anishinaabe word for wild rice.

[148] Adamek and Lorenz, 59.

[149] The entire project, consisting of a billboard, a series of temporary sculptural installations, travel and transportation between Tribe elders and university participants, and symposiums were primarily funded through a Minnesota State Arts Grant for $5000 as well as a number of private and non-traditional sponsors. Lorenz and Adamek also name the University's public art program, and major national organizations such as the Kellogg and Rockefeller Foundations. See Lorenz and Adamek, 61.

Lorenz and collaborator Margaret Adamek[150] comment on the placement of the billboard: "... tribal members coming home or to visit families, non-native vacationers, and residents of the region saw a billboard constructed with traditional and contemporary images of ricing, where elders from the community leading the renaissance in traditional ricing among community members were prominently featured in a historically layered construction."[151] The billboard juxtaposes multiple images; some color photos and some black and white photos of American Indians, on the left a more traditional view of them moving through the rice beds in a canoe, and on the right, a more contemporary-looking American Indian next to a field of rice. "Wild Rice/Prophecy...Keep it Wild" is transposed across the rice beds. It seems the black and white images are meant to create an aura of time, showing the continuity of the tradition of wild rice farming to passers-by who notice the billboard.[152]

The billboard piece was created after a series of experimental mixed media sculpture sited for the exterior of the University of Minnesota, St. Paul's agricultural studies building (Figure 22). Also designed by Lorenz with the help of tribal elders and the university's agriculture students, *Engagement Practice/Wild Rice* sought to "portray the differences in ways of knowing around food, land and wild rice between the scientific and tribal worlds."[153] This three-year temporary structure (2005-2007) abstractly referenced wild rice practice on the reservation in comparison to university's more Eurocentric agricultural techniques. Comprised of building materials including wood, steel, glass, images, and corrugated plexiglass, these

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[150] Margaret Adamek is a research fellow at the University of Minnesota with a doctorate degree in Consciousness Studies/Adult Education. She is involved in the food production industry and uses qualitative research methods to promote and explore multicultural collaboration.

[151] Adamek and Lorenz, 60.

[152] The American Indians pictured on the billboard lack a recognizable tribal identification. They are envisioned as distinct from other usual billboard faces, and their message is one of ecological and cultural awareness rather than a usual advertisement. Lacking the traditional tribal garb and iconography that oftentimes comprises references to American Indians, Lorenz' billboard imagines the aboriginal peoples as existing in real time and as real people. By this I mean, they are un-mythologized, and the focus is less on their cultural distinctiveness than on their surrounding landscape of the rice beds.

[153] "Tribal Communities Preserving Wild Rice," *Anishinaabeg Today*, October 11, 2006, 6.

temporary structures provided simple installations that referenced the project within the grounds of the institution. These temporary public art installations have addressed the needs Lorenz, Adamek, and other scholars of public art discuss, as diverse strategies become a means for reaching wider audiences and creating temporary forms of public art that can easily be transported to other places and communities.[154]

Components of the *Wild Rice Project* utilize a more universal approach to this identity-centered problem by emphasizing the environment and agriculture to traverse the boundary between center and periphery. Lorenz and Adamek see the capability for movement between these boundaries in the exploration of new techniques for approaching public art:

> An effective and fully contextualized public art is by nature situated in this "third space," incorporating unique funding mechanisms, employing nontraditional approaches to installation and exhibition, incorporating marginalized and cross-cultural publics, and thereby subverting the values and power structure of the art world and society at large.[155]

As the project takes on an ephemeral existence focused on providing a platform for dialogue between two seemingly uncommon communities, it simultaneously shifts the dominant power structure from the hands of the university to a shared space where the American Indian population and the mainstream have equal power and authority in exchange concerning the land. "The majority of the funding base, budget, and fundraising strategies were largely unconventional to mainstream arts and public arts programs, given the need to include large groups in dispersed geographic areas and the democracy/Indian nation-building interests inherent in the elders' agenda around the use of a public arts process to teach about and protect wild rice."[156] Without the necessary infrastructure in place to initiate a relationship between distinct

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[154] Lorenz presented these structures and ideas to American Indian communities throughout the region.
[155] Adamek and Lorenz, 58.
[156] Adamek and Lorenz, 60-1.

local communities that share the land, the use of public art in this instance provides the mechanism to illuminate a larger, local community. Dialogue enhances the democratic nature of this infrastructure. Symposia on wild rice have continued in place of the public art pieces.[157] The dialogue that culminated in public art projects has been sustained between the neighboring nations that share a desire to protect the traditions and the sovereignty of the American Indian tribe.

Adamek and Lorenz see the hybrid or multidisciplinary approach to public artmaking as crucial to the success of the project. Works must be accessible to both the native communities and the Western or mainstream community to avoid the risk of imposition on an unwanting community. The scholars maintain, "In Indian Country, these hybrid forms of public arts partnerships must contribute to native nation-building and the enhancement of sovereignty-in content, intent, and process; an entirely different and unique agenda for United States tribal communities than any other group."[158] The ability for the *Wild Rice Project* to cross the transnational border between the First Nations and the mainstream public attests to the success of the project, as temporary public art pieces provide non-traditional access to discussing an ecological and political issue that joins the opposing nations through a shared concern over a shared landscape.[159]

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[157] In 2009, a conference surrounding the issue of wild rice, *People Protecting Manoomin: Manoomin Protecting People; A Symposium Bridging Opposing Worldviews,* took place on the White Earth Reservation in partnership with the University of Minnesota. The symposium was held in order to continue discussion, dialogue, and resolution for protecting and regulating genomic research on wild rice that could potentially make the Anishinaabe Nation obsolete. As a joint hosting effort between the University of Minnesota and the White Earth Reservation, the symposium took place on the Reservation.

[158] Adamek and Lorenz, 62-63.

[159] Yet this approach to public art of course could be viewed from an alternatively critical perspective. Firstly, the relation of American Indians to the wild rice beds can only be recognized through their racial distinctiveness in the *Keep it Wild* billboard. To protect national sovereignty, the Anishinaabe must visualize tribal members as 'others' in order to distinguish their needs from those of the rest of the nation. The billboard, in effect, advertises American Indian distinctiveness as "wild." Contrasted with the constant urbanization of 'civilized' American cities, the 'wild natives' harkens back to the understanding of aboriginal peoples as 'noble savages'. Images integrated into the more conceptual sculptural structure *Engagement Practice/Wild Rice* are the same as those on the billboard. American

A shared interest, concern, and desire for power over the region's wild rice agricultural production is the mechanism by which the university and the Anishinaabe are able to communicate across borders. Simultaneously, the *Wild Rice Project* works to protect and make public a part of a cultural, ethnic, and national identity that distinguishes the Anishinaabe from the community surrounding the nearby university. Therefore, this project works on two transnational levels. Firstly, it creates a cross-national community through a shared ecological concern. Secondly, the project reinforces the identity of the Anishinaabee as a nation.

The *Wild Rice Project* is very much situated in a local context as the project affects local issues, assigns local meanings, an attests to the survival of a very local community. Moving across cultural and ethnic boundaries, it is meant to create a wider community that supports public needs and awareness about a local, site-specific place. While ecological issues have created dialogue through a range of public art projects, the ecological issue emphasized in the *Wild Rice Project* is specifically rooted in Anishinaabe land and its local agricultural production. However, it draws attention to the disruptive mechanisms behind globalization and the spread of capitalism as local identities and indigenous groups are wiped-out in the aftermath. It is only through blurring the boundaries of the neighboring communities and acknowledging a collective local public that mutual understanding and awareness can begin to become a reality. Lorenz and Adamek describe this play between the global and local writing:

> ...public art becomes increasingly an artmaking of hybridity-a novel means to interpret the multicultural character and origins of a postcolonial world; one where public space is conceived "globo-locally" and multiple worldviews, fundamental assumptions, iconography, and understandings of space and contesting sensibilities of the public sphere

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Indians are represented in connection to the land, to nature, and to agriculture. This relationship fits and feeds the stereotype that reinforces the position of First Peoples in the periphery. However, the Anishinaabe Tribal members collaborated with Lorenz concerning the visualizations used in the project; thus the notion of peripheral agency is very much a part of this project, and can help to detract from some of the more critical aspects of visualizing difference in terms of racial or ethnic characteristics and practices.

> coalesce, conflict, and morph in to the lived actuality of local meanings and metaphors. While the issues and publics are local in emphasis, the implications of what meanings emerge come from and diffuse back into a global field.[160]

Counteracting the homogenizing forces of globalization and the encroaching destruction of local identities, meanings, and traditions, public artists reassert the power of the local by helping to expand the meaning of the local to include a collective public not solely defined by ethnic or cultural identity.

The transnational community formed through the development of this public art project is linked by the locality of place and land brought to light primarily through the artist and a shared interest in ecological preservation. Yet if any artist can create this connection between different forms of locality or if certain artists are specifically suited to crossing the boundary between center and periphery remains to be questioned. Lorenz is very clear when he states that the root to this dialogic space is through the liminality of the artist him/herself. He writes, "Artists who participate as cultural hybrids are particularly well positioned to gain unique access to collaborating communities, to the depths and dimensions of the liminal public space, and to the new meanings that emerge from the exploration and experimentation of public art."[161] In other words, access to peripheral communities in public art emanate from the peripheral status of the artist who dwells in the dialogic realm.

Are multicultural artists better positioned to create works concerning peripheral identity? This would surely be limiting to public artists who are sincerely interested in exploring identities and localities perhaps unfamiliar to them. Artists would be forced to limit themselves to identities rooted in specific cultural and ethnic identities. There is a fine line between an artist's imposition within a community and an artist who instigates an egalitarian relationship between

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[160] Adamek and Lorenz, 58.
[161] Adamek and Lorenz, 64.

himself and the community, but it is the responsibility of the artist, no matter what his cultural identity may be, to create a platform for equal dialogue. Ademak and Lorenz warn, "Postcolonial public art... runs a similar risk to the type of contemporary public art accused of glorified community decoration or design. In the wrong hands, it can quickly devolve into an unexamined embrace of meaningless, anemic millennial, multiethnic tropes, where postcolonialism becomes commodified."[162] While Lorenz' project does create this form of balanced dialogue, it is not his identity that makes it so. The success lies in the fact that the community and dialogue he instigates are sustained even after his role is realized.[163]

Rather than solely insist on national, cultural, and ethnic autonomy, the *Wild Rice Project* works across borders to protect and ensure the survival of the Anishinaabe. The public art project exposes the vulnerability of the border while simultaneously reasserting its power, authority, and protection of federally recognized treaty negotiations. Local agricultural and economic concerns move across communities to create and sustain dialogue amidst the border. Identities and meanings are in constant flux as the periphery gains visibility and voice; however, the project attempts to redefine the periphery as a means to establish and reinforce its sub-national but autonomous existence.

Public art concerning the natural environment can create communities based on the shared experience of living on the earth, but perhaps we can more easily see our interconnectedness through projects on local scales. 'Think globally, act locally' is now 'act globally and locally.' Both are possible today as public art projects can transform and sustain

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[162] Adamek and Lorenz, 64.

[163] No research has been found that states the Tribe wanted to work with Lorenz specifically because of his ethnic identity. This project is successful because the Anishinaabe community felt comfortable and safe with Lorenz' collaborative processes. I contend, therefore, that it is not the artist's identity that will make a work successful, but it might be the artist's identity that allows for community members feel safe and in control of the meaning of the project.

global communities concerned with ecological issues. Globalization is the catalyst for the environmental problems we are facing today, and now it is the local being called on to protect the ecological consequences. This baffling irony that globalization features is a paradox we cannot escape in the world we live in today, and it is the continued insistence on the local that is necessary to counteract the detriments of the global.

Chapter 4: Imagining Dystopias

I. Conflict as Success in Democratic Spaces:

In many cases, people who fall under the transnational category are victims of war, famine, and government failure. These groups are transnational because they have to be. They have no choice. Many migrants take on dual nationalities because they have been forced from their homelands, their origins, and the place they feel that they belong. The formation of transnational communities in host-states or places of re-settlement is a mechanism for survival, protecting a cultural, ethnic, and/or religious identity and finding a way to support the homeland in order to one day move back. Because urban centers and identities are in such a constant state of movement and transformation, migrants can create new communities based on new relationships forged in host-states. Looking towards future communities rather than constantly back to historical tragedy, Sean Cubitt writes,

> The millions born into exile work not in a state of rootlessness, but in a world of relationships, diffident, difficult, fraught, fragile; nonetheless a world, a transnation of those displaced by the end of geography offered the chance to make a world after history. The old art of objects and even of ideas pales into the past: We have the future to build, and it will be global, networked and utterly new, or it will not be the future at all.[164]

When Nicolas Bourriaud put forth his idea of relational aesthetics, he overlooked what types of collaborative communities these works could really create. Curator Maria Lind evaluates Bourriaud's theory of audience interaction: "A significant portion of the criticism that has been leveled against him and the concept of relational aesthetics concerns to what degree it implies "good" collaboration, "positive" interaction and participation, i.e. what is the quality of exchange

[164] Cubitt, "From Internationalism to Transnations," 435.

that is stimulated?"[165] Situated within the confines of the gallery amongst people who already take an interest in viewing art, the communities Bourriaud points to are undemocratic in their premeditated community cohesiveness. Looking to artists such as Rikrit Tiravanija and Liam Gillick as models for artists following in the same manner, Bourriaud's relational aesthetics was soon criticized for its implied conceptual limitations. Tirvanija's *Pad Thai*, first exhibited in 1990, incorporated the artist's performative cooking of the traditional Thai meal for gallery goers. Ian Erickson-Kery of the Columbia Spectator writes, "The work placed an artistic frame around the process of food preparation and consumption, casting a fundamental element of human experience in a new light."[166] While gallery participants were able to interact with the artist and with one another, establishing a community predicated on the shared experience of cultural and personal exchange, the lack of tension between the community participants echoes the undemocratic nature of works Bourriaud chose as exemplary models of relational aesthetics.

Claire Bishop's "Antagonisms of Relational Aesthetics," put forth the idea that these communities could possess a more democratic spirit when the conflict and tension between community members was heightened rather than smothered within the walls of the art institution. Bishop maintains that the works Bourriaud highlights as producing relational aesthetics are those that "do not question their imbrication in it [the works' relationships to every day life]."[167] Denying the possibility for tension and the formation of heterogeneous communities, Maria Lind upholds, "The art based on relations that retain their [the community's] tensions and difficulties

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[165] Lind also describes the differences between collaboration and collectivity while addressing the issues concerning "Social Antagonisms" and the need for conflict to instigate democratic communities. Maria Lind, "Complications; On Collaboration, Agency and Contemporary Art, *Public* 39 (2009), 59.
[166] Ian Erickson-Kery, "Real Life and Art Blend in Prof. Tiravinija's Work," *Columbia Spectator* 8, Mar. 2011, http://www.columbiaspectator.com/2011/03/08/real-life-and-art-blend-in-prof-tiravanijas-work (accessed 18 Mar. 18, 2011).
[167] Bishop, "Social Antagonisms," 65.

is better than the art which is assumed to seek agreement and harmony..."[168] Artists like Thomas Hirschhorn attract Bishop's eye as his works pinpoint the tension between social classes. Hirschhorn's *Bataille Monument,*[169] made for the 2002 *Documenta* 11 in Kassel, Germany took art-goers to the Turkish-German working class neighborhood, Friedrich-Wöhler Siedlung, a site in which the differences between art-viewers and the community would probably be quite obvious. Hirschhorn hired community members for eight Euros an hour[170] to help in the building and installing processes of this work, instigating a participatory infrastructure but still under the ultimate control of the artist (Figures 23, 24). Pablo Lafuente of Frieze Magazine writes, "The tensions between these two different social and cultural circles reinvigorate the work, but somehow at its own expense: themes get lost in logistics, and the political stance of the artist always verges on the patronizing."[171] A series of sculptural installations, including a coffee shop, radio station, monument, and library, all which were maintained for a few months following the exhibition, were built as part of this installation that referred specifically (in textual references) and metaphorically to the surrealist philosopher. Displays reiterated Hirschhorn's rather chaotic style of installation, using a variety of found materials. Visitors would have to wait uncomfortably until a Turkish cab company could come to pick them up, otherwise, they would have to find another way back to the center of the city. Collaborative in the sense that the clashing of social classes at the site was crucial to elaborate meaning within the work, the *Bataille Monument* was not necessarily cooperative. Instead, it negated the isolating walls of the

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[168] Lind, "Complications," 59.
[169] The *Bataille Monument* was dedicated to the memory and celebration of surrealist philosopher Georges Bataille. Part of the social commentary layered into Hirschhorn's project references the class and educational divisions between spectators and community members as people living in this area would probably not be familiar with the writings of Bataille.
[170] Graham Coulter-Smith, "The Social Realist as Entrepreneur: Thomas Hirschhorn," in *Deconstructing Installation Art* (Casaid Publishing, 2006), http://www.installationart.net/Chapter3Interaction/interaction03.html (accessed 26 Mar. 2011).
[171] Pablo Lafuente, "Thomas Hirschhorn," *Frieze Magazine* 90 (2005), http://www.frieze.com/issue/review/thomas_hirschhorn/ (accessed 26 Mar. 2011).

museum and gallery space by situating it within the space of the periphery. Bishop's "Social Antagonisms" further illustrates Lind's statement, "Perhaps the problem is rather that there is too much forced commonality and prescribed collaboration today in the sense of social unanimity and political consensus."[172] These words pinpoint a movement taking place in public art as many artists resist the imaginary 'social unanimity' and instead present the realities of a economically, politically, and socially fragmented world.

While 'diaspora' has recently gained exceeding popularity in defining voluntary and involuntary mass migrations, the term actually refers to a very specific form of politically driven displacement. Perhaps the increasing popularity of diaspora studies is related to the upsurge in scholarship focused on globalization and its counterpart, transnationalism. Political scientist Avtar Brah writes about this new focus on migration suggesting that a diaspora has come to mean something different in the post-colonial age. "In the context of a proliferation of new border crossings, the language of 'borders' and 'diaspora' acquires a new currency."[173] As the boundaries that confine the nation-state have begun to dissolve or transform from stringency to flexibility, homogenous terms to define nationalities are no longer always feasible. Fluctuating and highly debated topics of citizenship, immigration laws, asylum seekers, and refugees reflect the global movement of people and information. In fact, many scholars, including political scientist Helena Schulz agree, "diasporas require a transnational existence-a dispersal and a diffusion throughout the world."[174] Rather than thinking of transnationalism as a choice and a privilege of the era of globalization, we should begin to think of it more as a consequence. Sean Cubitt writes, "...the indicators of lifestyle-basically destructive consumerism-are purchased at

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[172] Lind, "Complications," 56.
[173] Brah, *Cartographies of Diaspora: Contesting Identities*, (London and New York: Routledge, 1996), 179.
[174] Helena Lindholm Schulz, *The Palestinian Diaspora: Formation of Identities and Politics of Homeland* (London and New York: Routledge, 2003), 9.

the expense of immiserated offshore degradation and ethnocide of inner urban populations in the metropolises, and on and on."[175]

Reflecting back to the work of Bishop and Lind, the fragmentation caused by the lack of social unanimity, between the public and private spheres, between voluntary and involuntary migrants, and essentially between the center and periphery in the twenty-first century provides the mechanisms for approaching community building public art practices more successfully. In many instances, works that bring to the surface the inconsistencies and inequalities of contemporary life are those that reach a more democratic process. In 1984, Lucy Lippard wrote, "Cultural democracy is a right just like economic and political democracy, the right to make and to be exposed to the greatest diversity of expression. A true cultural democracy would encourage artists to speak for themselves and for their communities, and it would give us all access to audiences both like and unlike ourselves."[176] However, as we have gathered from new genre projects, the idea of the artist as a spokesperson for the community is highly problematic. Therefore, artists that develop platforms in which the communities can take control of the meaning and function of the work, where the trace of the artist becomes invisible, are those that represent the idea of cultural democracy more closely.

Artists can do this in a number of ways. Perhaps most obviously, artists can visualize dissension within the community in order to instigate engagement with the theme or context.[177]

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[175] Cubitt, From Internationalism to Transnations, 432.

[176] Lippard, "Trojan Horses: Activist Art and Power," in Art after Modernism: Rethinking Representation, ed. Brian Wallis (New York: New Museum of Contemporary Art; Boston: D.R. Godine, 1984), 342.

[177] Dissension can be contained within the context of the images and actions produced as methods of questioning and interrogating. Fragmentation rather than a picture of unity can oftentimes spark the dialogue that incorporates diverse voices from the community and calls attention to the reality of the twenty-first century. Dissension can pose as a counteraction against imposing structures and phenomena. Richard Serra's *Tilted Arc* installed in New York City's Federal Plaza in 1981 and dismantled in 1989 provides an early precedent for the ability of public art to create communities in their frustrations with public space and the government's authority to impose upon its spatial freedoms. Public works that call attention to and counteract the encroachment of private ownership over public space as well as the heightened surveillance of public space provide examples of dissension that will be discussed

In other words, the imagined dystopias act as platforms for creating democratic communities devoted to discussing and finding resolutions to real world concerns. Rather than pursuing the imaginary "microtopias"[178] Bourriaud hopes relational art will facilitate artists who help to explore the fragmentation, victimization, and displacement.[179] Works that are contentious, that incorporate conflict in their design, fabrication, and installation are those that often create lasting impressions on the communities they initiate or target. Rosalyn Deutsche addresses this in her discussion of the success of Richard Serra's *Tilted Arc* (1981-1989) as the culmination of a democratic process. Deutsche writes, "...urban space is produced by specific socio-economic conflicts that should not simply be accepted, either wholeheartedly or regretfully, as evidence of the inevitability of conflict, but rather, politicized-opened to contestation as social and therefore mutable relations of oppressions."[180]

II. Imagining a Dis-United Community:

Part of this acknowledgement involves the implementation of public art projects that allow for exchange, honesty, and trust between the artist/organization and the participants. It is not only about finding a voice for the voiceless, but also about creating an atmosphere where voices can be heard, understood, and used to formulate communities that acknowledge the past and want to provide hope for a better future. The projects featured below are a few of the

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more in depth in the following sections. Discord can embed itself in the process of realizing the project, bringing to light the lack of social unanimity in the community that forms in the process of design and development of the public art piece.

[178] Bourriaud, *Relational Aesthetics*, 13.

[179] Bishop considers Bourriaud's understanding of relational art writing, "The main difference, as he sees it, is the shift in attitude towards social change: instead of a "utopian" agenda, today's artists seek only to find provisional solutions in the here and now; instead of trying to change their environment, artists today are simply "learning to inhabit the world in a better way"; instead of looking forward to a future utopia, this art sets up functioning "microtopias" in the present" (Bishop, "Antagonism," 54). Also see Bourriaud, especially page 13-14 in *Relational Aesthetics*.

[180] Deutsche, 278.

relatively small number of projects I have come across that instigate communities through the presentation of individual experiences that can be translated to viewers and participants through the commonality of these experiences in today's world of constant transformation and growing personal displacement.

In 2006, Claudia Zanfi from aMAZE Cultural Lab[181] organized *Going Public: Politics Subjects and Places*, a temporary public art installation and exhibition that lasted the eight months from February to October. Zanfi writes of aMAZE Cultural Lab, "Mobility, migration, memory, borders, new geographies, the Mediterranean areas and the Middle East, the public sphere and sustainability are our areas of interest."[182] Atlante Mediterraneo[183] included a combination of organized projects ranging from interventions to performances to cultural exchanges regarding the micro-geographical case studies concerning Istanbul, Beirut, Nicosia, Tel Aviv, Alexandria, and Barcelona. aMAZE Cultural Lab maintains that communities surrounding the Mediterranean provide insight into the transformation globalization has implemented within society.

> The founding of "EuroMediterranean Space" and the creation of the corridor known as the "Meridian Corridor" are a territorial expression of a global policy which concerns all the Mediterranean countries, seen as a single political/geographical unit. Thus there is an issue of favoring the interplay of different cultures and different peoples, as well as of the geographical moderation of the points of exchange and mobility.[184]

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[181] aMAZE Cultural Lab is a non-profit organization based out of Italy founded in 2000 by Claudia Zanfi and Gianmaria Conti. The organization consists of collaborators from an interdisciplinary range of professionals including sociologists and journalists. The organization utilizes art as a means to prompt cultural exchange.
[182] Jade Dressler, "Degrees of Temporary," The Design Observer Group, 22 Sept. 2010, http://changeobserver.designobserver.com/entry.html?entry=15098 (accessed 3 Mar. 2011).
[183] Atlante Mediterraneo is the name of the 2006 event organized by aMAZE Cultural Lab for their public art exhibition Going Public. Going Public was inaugurated in 2003 and held in Italy. Since then, Going Public has expanded its range of exhibition locations and themes. In 2006, Atlante Mediterraneo was supported by the European Culture Foundation (Amsterdam), Regione Emilia Romagna, Provincia di Modena, Commune di Formigine, Programma Gioventú per l'Europa, Fondazione Cassa di Risparmio di Modena, and the Anna Lindh Foundation (Alexandria) with the patronage of DARC, Ministero Beni Culturali Roma, Universitá Etica per Condivisione e Conoscenza (Palermo). "Atlante Mediterraneo," aMAZE Cultural Lab, http://www.amaze.it/en/inside.html (accessed 28 Mar. 2011).
[184] "Atlante Mediterraneo," http://www.amaze.it/en/inside.html.

All works developed for this project circulated around the tensions concerning Mediterranean identity. *Public Art Review* references the work of Gianmaria Conti, *Memory Box,* exhibited in both the Turkish and Greek areas of Cyprus (Figure 25). A room-like installation housed within the urban spaces of the city, *Memory Box* is perhaps better characterized as a space for story-telling, providing the spontaneous participant an aura of comfort and protection, facilitating the ability for an honest exchange. Located in liminal areas and/or border zones in which the play of history, identity, and memory coincide to provide counter-narratives to state history, Conti's work presents a space where individual experiences can emerge. Zanfi writes:

> The *Memory Box* is a mobile device for "emergency zones." It functions as a public kiosk for sound installations, lectures and performances. A cultural antenna, it has been activated along sensitive border areas such as Weimar, Germany and Larisa, near Greece, and works by comparing history, or the official and political version of events, with stories told by people who have lived those events. After being located in a specific place, the Memory Box becomes a link between present and future stories, recollections and identities. In this way, it records not only experiences, but also visions and hopes.[185]

The borderlands of Cyprus mark the last divided capital in the world, and this site of contention becomes an effective site for a spontaneous community to unfold that tells the stories of its experiences in this liminal space. Yet rather than solely looking to the past and a historical experience of suffering to define its identity today, this community looks towards the future, escaping the isolating reinforcement of the continuation of a historical struggle. Recorded inside the box and displayed instantaneously on monitors placed on the exterior of the space (with the participant's permission) individual experiences of the larger Cyprus community could be seen and heard by passers-by. *Memory Box* was eventually archived in an online platform made for

[185] Dressler, "Degrees of Temporary."

the public to visit and re-visit the work. *Memory Box* provided passers-by a space to express their experiences honestly, in contrast to the political history that dominates the area.

> Not only does this new "political community" have a new vision of the world, of technology, of the means of production, of economic exchanges and human migration, but it brings with it unprecedented ways of conceiving and implementing social and relational life. The market, the public sphere, popular sovereignty-the typical spaces of modern society- lead to new collective practices which in turn call for new horizons of understanding.[186]

Voices of dissent through personal experiences invade public space as private individual experiences become public. Rather than ignoring these voices, *Memory Box* gives them a platform and function as they transform into the collective political community. Although mutual understanding is not necessary for deeming a space or entity culturally democratic, there is hope that this community based on exchange will ultimately lead to acceptance and continued cross-cultural discussion.

Marjetica Potrč, known for her confrontation of the effects of globalization on local people and cultures, focuses a great deal of work on slums as an inevitable consequence of modernism and postmodernism. Referring to slums as both the social outcome of global power shifts and of increasing migration to urban cities as well as sites to enact survival mechanisms, architectural historian Patricio del Real writes extensively on the strange nature of slums as both sites of dominance enacted by globalizing powers and sites of resistance for the consequential populations.

> Slums cannot, however, be reduced to romantic, antimodern, or idealized characterizations, to vernacular spaces of rural sociability and precapitalist exchanges or microcommunities that escape global capital. A stance that counters the sentimentality of nostalgia is one that sees slums as part of the growing resistance to practices of globalization from below. Informal constructions (which involve a range of diverse and multiple building practices) are then seen as a

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[186] Claudia Zanfi, "Atlante Meditteraneo- Geography of Complexity," aMAZE Cultural Lab, http://www.amaze.it/eng/node/103 (accessed 4 Mar. 2011).

> survival tactic installed by or within global capital itself after the collapse of the social state.[187]

Viewed in light of this strange description of the dual nature of slums, Potrč has found ways to combine art practices with survival techniques. In 2000, she created a significant work for *Manifesta* 3 in Ljubljana, Slovenia. Her *House for Travelers* references a UNESCO resettlement project created for Kenya and represents on a larger level the nature of displacement of refugees and how governments lack the infrastructure necessary to provide housing for the influx of migrants (Figure 26). Constructed with a tin roof and stilts to protect a platform holding a minimal amount of possessions, Potrč provides a temporary structure from which the residents can continue construction with the help of social groups devoted to helping the refugee community.

Another of Portč's projects that falls into the same consequential category of globalization includes *Dry Toilet*, built for the La Vega slum community in Caracas, Venezuela in 2003. After six months of research concerning community needs, Portč and collaborator Liyat Esakov built a dry and ecologically safe toilet. Her work calls attention to the lack of architectural and urban planning in the city that denies over half of the population water for approximately five days out of the week. Contemporary architectural historian Patricio del Real writes, "As with just about any contemporary urban slum or informal settlement in Cairo, Rio, or Mumbai, the lack of services prompts inhabitants to solve the daily problems of meeting their most basic needs...In such extreme conditions, agency is thus seen in a raw and unmediated state."[188] While this latter project does not necessarily fit into the collaborative motif I have been emphasizing since the introduction, Potrč's ability to call attention to the negative effects of

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[187] Patricio del Real, "Slums Do Stink: Artists, Bricolage and Our Need for Doses of "Real" Life," *Art Journal* 67 (2008), 83.
[188] del Real, 2.

globalization and the inherent problems created for migrating city dwellers has opened up a new point of entry for which the "victims" (i.e. those who suffer from the inability of the government to offer provisions for basic human needs) can gain agency in finding creative paths to survival. Many of Potrč's works are meant to act as platforms for continued implementation, and although in these instances the artist herself acts as agent, in the future, it is the slum dwellers who could potentially put these platforms into practice.

Another artist following in a similar tradition is Krzysztzof Wodiczko[189] who has created a range of projects that speak to the problems created by globalization, specifically, immigrant, oppressed, and marginalized communities.

> In addition to democratic and political theories, Wodiczko has embraced and integrated the work of Judith Lewis Herman, a psychiatrist and author of *Trauma and Recovery*, and others who have examined personal crisis and renewal through the lens of social justice. Those who have been marginalized or excluded by society frequently experience trauma. Considering the psychological, therapeutic, and ethical dimensions of public space, Wodiczko proposes that it is precisely these people, who are least likely to be heard, that need to be encouraged and empowered to speak.[190]

Originally known for his large-scale projections onto traditional monuments, Wodiczko uses the politically charged facade in an attempt to balance the voice of the marginalized with the dominating presence of state sponsored sculptures. The artist utilizes public space for the presentation of counter-narratives that deny the hegemony of the State's presence. Patricia Phillips writes, "More specifically, he has examined how public space can be a site of enactment for, as well as an obstacle to, democratic ideas..."[191] His work eventually led to the appropriation of other multidisciplinary media including sound, motion, and audience interaction. Works like

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[189] Polish born artist Krzysztof Wodiczko is known for his public projections that focus largely on displaced immigrants and victims of oppression. The artist grew up in a Warsaw ghetto, and has since emigrated from Poland to Canada and to the United States.
[190] Patricia Phillips, "(Inter)Disciplinary Actions," *Public Art Review* 15 (2003), 13.
[191] Phillips, 12.

Charlestown's (Massachusetts) *Bunker Hill Monument* (1997),[192] projected onto the neighborhood obelisk, and the *Tijuana Projection* (2001)[193] (Figure 27), displayed on the exterior of the Centro Cultural de Tijuana, offer the opportunity to utilize public space as a site of contention and exchange. In the former project, Wodiczko went door to door in Charlestown, listening to and recording the tragic experiences of mothers in the dangerous area while at the same time, sharing his own experiences of tragedy in the Warsaw ghetto.[194] Apparently unwilling to tell their stories to this "outsider" who could not understand the mothers' experience of loss, the potential participants were invited by Wodiczko to view his projection on Cracow, Poland's City Hall, where he projected the hands of women talking about their experiences of domestic violence and abuse. Participants were pleased with the way the artist captured the pain and agreed to be part of the project in which their heads as well as their hands holding a photograph of their lost children were projected onto the obelisk. Ken Shulman of the New York Times writes, "Krzysztof Wodiczko...will transform the ...Egyptian-style obelisk into a nightmare granite goddess, its massive form made to seem weightless through animation, and then weighty with the gravity of these mothers' tales."[195]

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[192] Sponsored and organized by the Institute of Contemporary Art's ICA (Boston, Massachusetts)/Vita Brevis "Let Freedom Ring Initiative."

[193] Sponsored by the CECUT Project as part of InSITE2000, a binational contemporary arts project based out of San Diego, California and Tijuana, Mexico. For more information, see "Krzysztof Wodiczko: The Tijuana Projection," Media Art Net, http://www.medienkunstnetz.de/works/the-tijuana-projection/ (accessed 26 Mar. 2011).

[194] The northern edge of Boston had the highest unsolved murder rate in the city. Charlestown has its own support group, Charlestown After Murder, to deal with the high amount of loss. The MIT News states, "He [Krzysztof Wodiczko] was particularly disturbed by Charlestown's high murder rate and the fact that residents were afraid to report the murders to the police." "Wodiczko's Bunker Hill projection opens," *MIT News*, 23 Sept. 1998, http://web.mit.edu/newsoffice/1998/bunker-0923.html (accessed 12 Mar. 2011).

[195] Ken Shulman, "ART; A Monument to Mothers' Lost Children," *New York Times,* 20 Sept. 1998, http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=980DE1DB1031F933A1575AC0A96E958260 &pagewanted=all (accessed 16 Mar. 2011).

The *Tijuana Project* also focused on the theme of violence and abuse, as Wodiczko concentrated on the women who work in the maquiladora industry in Tijuana.[196] He developed a headset and microphone in which the shared experiences of the participants could be instantaneously projected onto the Omnimax Theater facade. Capturing an interesting but limited view of the womens' faces as they were telling their stories, the headset gave the participants a chance to move through the 1,500 person crowd as participants relayed their experiences. The public projection of testimonials was not meant to create an atmosphere of understanding; quite the contrary. In the words of the artist, "Any attempt to identify with the person is a danger. To say, 'I understand what you went through', is the most unacceptable response. The opposite may be more appropriate. 'I will never understand what you went through'."[197] Mutual understanding is not the goal of his works, but acknowledgement, exchange, and forthcoming honesty. By publicizing the experience of the victims through their singular voices, Wodickzo has found a way to use public space to voice the experiences of the voiceless through the re-appropriation of historic monuments. In the artist's words:

> Silence and invisibility are the biggest enemies of democracy. If people don't open up, if they don't provide an unsolicited act of free speech on behalf of the general well being, then democracy cannot be practiced. If you have a self-imposed silence, then you cannot exercise your First Amendment right. And if you cannot speak, none of your other constitutional rights can be exercised.[198]

Wodiczko utilizes the stagnant power and site-specificity of state-sponsored monuments to challenge their own hegemony. "He challenges the silent, stark monumentality of buildings, activating them in an examination of notions of human rights, democracy, and truths about the

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[196] The maquiladora industry refers to companies and factories that make products for clients outside of the producing country. Women provide the majority of employees for the maquila industry in Mexico. This industry is also known for the sexual exploitation of women.
[197] "Krzysztof Wodiczko," *Art:21*, http://www.pbs.org/art21/slideshow/?slide=712&artindex=159 (accessed 10 Feb. 2011).
[198] Shulman, "A Monument to Mothers and Lost Children."

violence, alienation, and inhumanity that underlie countless aspects of social interaction in present-day society."[199]

Another body of Wodiczko's work combines this method of testimony with projects that can be transported throughout the city. Rather than projecting testimonials onto a permanent, site-specific monument, these public art pieces are transportable, creating communities as the agent navigates through public space. Creating hand-held, technologically enhanced sculptural objects that act as survival tools for the marginalized, Wodiczko's projects allow for constant and diversified interaction with the public moving through the larger realm of the city. Wodiczko's *Alien Staff* (1992) is a sculptural and performative piece in which the artist created a mechanism for immigrants to traverse the city holding a staff-like support with a small television attached (Figure 28).[200] The television displayed videos of the 'staff-holding' participants telling their experiences of displacement and invisibility. Allowing for immigrants, a usually silenced community, to directly address spontaneous passers-by, rather than creating a piece in which audiences had the choice to participate, essentially gave the immigrants more agency and the resulting communities more spontaneity. Ephemeral, technological, and collaborative, works like Wodickzo's *Alien Staff* present an early precedent for transitory community-sited art works. Yet rather than developing viewing opportunities that are distanced from the every day reality of life, Wodiczko's work very literally invades public space so that communities that form are part of a democratic process of cultural and political clashing. Bourriaud addresses this notion although perhaps not in his choice of artists, but certainly in his rhetoric when he writes, "The role of

[199] "Krzysztof Wodiczko," http://www.pbs.org/art21/artists/wodiczko/.
[200] *Alien Staff* has been used in New York, Paris, Houston, Helsinki, Barcelona, Warsaw, and Stockholm.

artworks is no longer to form imaginary and utopian realities, but to actually be ways of living and models of action with the existing real, whatever scale chosen by the artist."[201]

While the artists/organizations who instigate and fund these projects are part of an art community recognized by internationally renowned institutions, their approach to public art is responsible and democratically-centered. Neither commodifying the plight of the immigrant, the victim, or the marginalized, nor celebrating their peripheral position as cultural empowerment and new genre projects tended to do, these projects allow for honest exchange that affords agency to the subjects of the works. The position of the artist disappears as previously unheard voices take the public stage. Blurring the boundary between center and periphery, the issues aroused by these artists are focused not merely on specific identities, but also on experiences. These experiences are what create larger communities with those who listen, who hear, and who relate these experiences to their own. The artist and funding organizations are also project initiators, but they do not impose any unwanted mediation between the community and the public.

It is important to note, however, that these projects do not contain the same type of platform for continued community as projects mentioned in the past chapters. By the stipulations offered in the introduction, these projects would fall into a less-successful category; however, I see these projects as exceptions to the rule. Issues surrounding immigration, displacement, war, etc. are constantly transforming. A devastating current event one day becomes yesterday's news. No one situation can hold the spotlight for long enough to maintain the interest of the public. Communities that form concerning the events transform as commonly as events, and artists have captured this phenomenon as well as its consequences. Dystopic works represent these transitory communities. The communities that form around the works are effective in creating social

[201] Bourriaud, *Relational Aesthetics*, 12.

transformations that bring people out of the shadows and into public space. Distant victims become neighbors, and the presence of the other in public space confuses the boundary between the two. Projecting a perspective usually invisible or hidden from the public ultimately and inevitably changes the power structure in public space, and essentially introduces the public community to every day realities.

III. Public Space as a Site of Resistance, The Fight for the Streets:

Jaume Plensa's *Crown Fountain* (2004) (Figure 29), two fifty-foot towers fabricated from glass block and LED screens, show the constantly changing faces of hundreds of 'ordinary' Chicago citizens. Referencing the traditional use of gargoyles in fountains, the video participants purse their lips as water flows through openings in the screens into a shallow pool. Plensa introduces a subtle hint of showcasing Chicago's diverse identity through its playful display. *Crown Fountain* showed to Chicago residents and visitors to Millennium Park the excitement public art can create; however, it also reminded the audience that what they might consider public space is certainly not free and democratic.

In December of 2007, the art community uncovered and publicized the city government's placement of security cameras on top of Plensa's towers in order to survey the popular and over-crowded public space. Masked as a free space in which art and life fuse into a playful installation in the middle of the city, the dilemma surrounding *Crown Fountain* also corresponds to what Foucault described as the panopticon effect,[202] enacting government censorship over public space and encouraging self-censorship as people began to notice the cameras. The revisitation of the fear surrounding Big Brother and the contemporary proliferation of CCTV cameras and

[202] For further reading, see Michel Foucault's *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison,* trans. Alan Sheridan (Second Vintage Vintage Books: New York, 1995)*,* especially Chapter 3 that focuses on the panopticon.

technological surveillance leads Allan Lab of the Art Institute of Chicago to say, "To add surveillance to a piece all about faces transforms it into an Orwellian nightmare."[203] While many in the art community cried out against the cameras as an insult to the aesthetic wishes of the artist, the presence of the cameras also catalyzed a public outcry on blogs and websites that quickly led to the ultimate dismantling of the cameras. Patricia Phillips maintains, "The subject of democracy and panoptic culture has stimulated new forms of interdisciplinary work."[204] Public artists and initiatives have instigated projects that target the practice of surveillance in a world that is controlled by capitalistic powers.

iSee (2001), is an online collaborative project that tracks closed circuit televisions in major cities. "Participants in this ongoing project may subject a planned walk in the city to route-planning software developed by the collaborative group that offers a "path of least surveillance."[205] Public projects initiate ways in which the public can counteract government and corporate control over public spaces. Other organizations, such as the Surveillance Camera Players, perform plays in front of CCTV cameras. Phillips writes, "Questions of public space, a growing panoptic environment, the relationship of democracy and immigration, rights and liberties, and the influence of feminism on spatial practices invariably require multiple lens and perspectives."[206]

Christopher Smith writes about Urban Social Movements as methods for reclaiming public space from the corporations that have claimed control. Originating in London in the 1990s, *Reclaim the Streets* began as a project meant to dispute the encroachment of automobiles overtaking the public space (Figure 30). "In recent years, RTS has become highly conscious of

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[203] Libby Sander, "A Tempest When Art Became Surveillance," *The New York Times*, 28 Dec. 2006. http://www.nytimes.com/2006/12/28/us/28cameras.html?_r=1 (accessed 17 Feb. 2011).
[204] Phillips, 14.
[205] Phillips, 14.
[206] Phillips, 15.

the importance of situating their critique of car culture within the larger framework of global capitalism."[207] Claiming that public space belongs to the collective public, RTS organizes demonstrations encouraging public awareness and community collaborations to take back public space. Expanding its mission to protest the encroachment of global capitalism, Smith maintains, "Contemporary urban social movements such as RTS have developed as a direct response to the increasingly violent politicization of urban space by the multiple factors and forces of hyper-capitalist globalization in the postmodern cityscape."[208] Focusing a great deal on RTS in Toronto, Smith describes a demonstration held in Yonge-Dundas Square, one of the city's most popular business districts. RTS targeted this specific location because the Square symbolizes the growing privatization of public space through corporate partnership between capitalist enterprises and the city.

> Since its inception in the early 1990s, the RTS movement has consistently employed carnivalesque strategies in its agenda of "reclaiming" urban (public) spaces that have been militarized, sanitized, privatized-and in some cases blatantly colonized-by the increasingly violent forces of hyper-capitalist globalization...Closely related to the playful, carnivalesque nature of urban protest practiced by RTS is the tendency to blur, collapse, and erase the distinctions between art, politics, and everyday life-another strategy that can be traced back to the twentieth-century European avant-garde.[209]

As government power is shared with privatized ownership, public space itself becomes privatized. Smith writes, "In this sense, as a *global* urban social movement, RTS clearly reflects the tension between the "global" and the "local" that is generally posited as being a fundamental aspect of the contemporary process of globalization (i.e. "*glocalization*")."[210]

In 2002, RTS participants held a spontaneous party in Dundas Square, a playful reference to the carnivalesque atmosphere emphasized in Situationist works. Smith refers more directly to

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[207] Smith, ""Whose Streets?": Urban Social Movements and the Politicization of Space," *Public* 29 (2004), 157.
[208] Smith, 158.
[209] Smith, 164. Smith is probably referring to the Situationists in this quotation.
[210] Smith, 158-63.

the Dutch architect Constant, "whose lifelong project New Babylon involved articulating a radical vision for a utopian, situationist-inspired city."[211] Within this philosophy rests the notion that the street provides a social space for collective action, and that the public space is a collective space. As participants took over the space chanting "Whose Streets?" Toronto Police tried to quell the crowd through what Smith describes as "aggressive and violent attempts."[212]

The continual appearance of RTS in public spaces creates a global community linked by the common distrust of public space. Contesting globalization, the power of the state and the corporation, and the dissolution of freedom, public space has become both the site of freedom and the site for contesting the lack of freedom. Reminding the public that public space does not necessarily relate to democracy has become a motif in not only the work of public artists, but also in conversations concerning the way public space is used.

IV. When Public Art Illuminates Public Disunity, *The Edward Said Mural*:

Once again, however, we arrive at the same problem of the homogenizing characteristics of communities. Inherently, some projects within their attempts at fabrication can create communities that express disagreement on issues related to what these communities mean and what they hope to accomplish. This contention can oftentimes assert a community linked by discontent rather than cohesion, and in many cases, projects that fall into this category can bring to the surface issues that previously remained subdued. In 2007, the Palestinian Student Union at San Francisco Student University (SFSU) unveiled a mural in the Cesar Chavez Student Union (Figure 31). Meant to celebrate the life of the late post-colonial theorist Edward Said and celebrate Palestinian culture and heritage, the design chosen for this public art project was part of

[211] Smith, 161.
[212] Smith, 165.

a process of public panels, approvals from the Student Union, and ultimately, a petition to the university president, Robert Corrigan. The General Union of Palestinian Students (GUPS) claims, "We set out to do something for Palestine and Palestinians everywhere. The idea for a mural project that presents and preserves indigenous Palestinian culture, while also advocating for Palestinian rights was a goal that seemed so remote."[213] Designed by Palestinian-American professor Fayeq Oweis and Susan Greene the *Palestinian Cultural Mural*, better known as the *Edward Said Mural*, was funded by ten sponsors including programs within the university and public organizations and businesses, and almost all sponsors are situated within an Arab, Palestinian, or Muslim context.[214]

The bust portrait of cultural theorist and Palestinian exile Edward Said shows the scholar wearing a traditional Palestinian Kufiyya.[215] Known for his book *Orientalism* (1978), Said is one of the first post-colonial scholars to address the conceptual 'other'. The border surrounding his image on the mural visualizes an excerpt from Said's work reading, "Humanism is the only, and I would go so far as saying, the final resistance we have against inhuman practices and injustices that disfigure human history."[216] In the background, representations of Jerusalem, New York City, and San Francisco symbolize respectively Said's birthplace, his long-time home, and his connection to SFSU. On the wall built around Jerusalem, text from Palestinian poet Mahmoud Darwish reads, "I am from there. I am from here."[217] In the left foreground, Palestinians dressed

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[213] Dr. Fayeq Oweis, an Arab-American artist and Susan Greene, a Jewish-American artist and also one of the founders of the Break the Silence Mural Project were the lead artists for this project, with help from members of the General Union of Palestinian Students. Other artists and volunteers mentioned in the Mural Inauguration Program include Marina Perez Wong, Brooke Fancher, Claire Jackal, and Robert Minervini

[214] Sponsors include: Middle East Children's Alliance, Sunbula Arab Feminist for Change, A.S. Performing Arts, ASI, Arab Cultural and Community Center, Richard Oaks Multi-Cultural Center, AROC/ADC, Zawaya, Arab and Muslim Ethnicities and Diaspora, Intitiative (AMED), and the College of Ethnic Studies.

[215] A Kufiyya is a traditional Palestinian scarf.

[216] Edward Said, *Orientalism Twenty-Five Years Later: Worldy Humanism v. the Emprire Builders*, 7 Aug. 2003, http://www.miftah.org/PrinterF.cfm?DocId=2314 (accessed 10 Apr. 2011).

[217] Mahmoud Darwish, "Counterpoint for Edward Said," *New American Writing* 27, trans. Fady Joudah.

in traditional clothing perform a Palestinian dance of resistance, Debkah,[218] while doves, olive trees, and cactus trees iconographically reference the distant Palestinian landscape, a desire for peace, and a need for patience. In the foreground, Palestinian children read books, a symbol of a hopeful future. To the right of the GUPS seal, with text in English and Arabic, is a memorial stamp honoring of Edward Said.[219]

As important as it is to relay what is in the finished mural, it is perhaps more significant to describe the controversy concerning what was forced out of the finalized project. Two communities formed in response to this project, one of mural advocates and one of opponents of the mural's meaning and assumed pro-Palestinian stance. This project caused contention surrounding the presentation of identity that harkens back to the problem with cultural empowerment projects and new genre projects meant to pay extra attention to peripheral people and communities. The blatant display of identity in this project immediately activates questions as to whether cultural or ethnic identity is useful in creating public understanding or acceptance in today's world in which everyone seems like the "other."

In 2006, SFSU President Robert Corrigan mandated a moratorium on the project because of the presence of a well-known Palestinian cartoon character, Handalah, who held a key and a pen that resembled the shape of a sword. Handalah is generally known within the Palestinian community as a symbol of struggle, however, opponents of the mural saw the presence of a key and sword as a threatening reference to armed struggle. In a Golden Gate Press article Jason Shuffler writes, "Opponents of the mural said Handalah represents the destruction of Israel and the key it is holding represents the right of return. The General Union of Palestine Students...said

[218] Palestinian dance of non-violent resistance. Also the dance Palestinian students performed at the Malcom X Pavilion for the mural inauguration ceremony.
[219] The GUPS hopes that this rendition will one day become a postal reality.

Handalah is a peaceful symbol of Palestinian culture and struggle for liberation."[220] Advocates of the original mural design were alarmed and angered by the disempowering response to what they saw as a non-violent gesture representing Muhammed's prophecy, "The ink of the scholar is more holy than the blood of the matyr."[221] However, according to Corrigan and mural opponents, Handalah imagery transformed the mural into a symbol of bigotry. Reporters claim Corrigan to have said that the mural (with Handalah) is "conflict-centered" and represents "international struggle rather than pride in cultural heritage."[222] Ultimately, the Palestinian Student Union sent out a petition to the SFSU public addressed to Corrigan as they demanded the reinstatement of the mural and remand for comments that illuminated the mural as bigoted. The vehement petition challenged Corrigan's disapproval with a justification for the Handalah figure and desire to protect Palestinian culture and freedom in visualized cultural identity.

The anger aroused by Corrigan's response to the mural was in part due to the public process the GUPS utilized in the development of the project. Appropriating the voice of the public by opening up discussion concerning mural design to free symposiums and meetings, the student board meant to approve murals on campus and the Palestinian mural organization were upset by Corrigan's seemingly late interruption of the project. This controversy harkens back to 1994 when SFSU's Student Union supported the erection of a *Malcom X Mural* in the Cesar Chavez center. With skulls and dollar bills painted over the Jewish star on the *Malcom X Mural*, questions of whether SFSU supported anti-Semitism became rife within the community until Corrigan's eventual call to the police to quell riots when the mural was taken down.[223]

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[220] Jason Shuffler, "Corrigan's Comments Fuel Mural Debate," *Golden Gate Press,* 10 Oct. 2006 http://xpress.sfsu.edu/archives/news/007117.html (accessed 18 Mar. 2011).
[221] ZAHID, 15 Oct. 2006, comment on Edward Said Mural at SFSU, *My Life Dump*, http://mylifedump.com/page/5/?s=sfs (accessed 4 Jan. 2011).
[222] ZAHID, http://mylifedump.com/page/5/?s=sfs.
[223] Shuffler, "Corrigan's Comments Fuel Mural Debate."

Corrigan's response, therefore, represents the controversy concerning the democracy of even the most transparently developed projects.

Palestinian transnationalism in the case of the *Edward Said Mural* is rooted in a specific cultural heritage and a multi-national sentiment of displacement and belonging. Amidst a background pointing to Jerusalem, New York City, and San Francisco, Said is shown as coming from multiple places. A Palestinian exile, Said symbolizes the Palestinian transnational population who has had to resettle in new and distant places. As Said gained international notoriety for his works, the constant reference to his nationality and cultural heritage reiterated the continual focus on origins even within a globalized world. In his introductory essay to the 2009 Tate Triennial *Altermodern,* curator Bourriaud writes,

> 'Where do you come from?' appears to be its [postmodernism's] most pressing question, and essentialism its critical paradigm. Identification with genre, ethnicity, a sexual orientation or a nation sets in motion a powerful machinery: multiculturalism, now a critical methodology, has virtually become a system of allotting meanings and assigning individuals their position in the hierarchy of social demands, reducing their whole being to their identity and stripping all their significance back to their origins.[224]

If nothing else, post-colonialism has brought to our attention that traversing between the periphery to the center is never a simple result of agency or choice. The possibility for moving between the two has only become possible as scholars have begun to acknowledge the inescapable legacy of colonialism. If Said fought for recognition from and infiltration into the dominant institution, why use him as a figurehead to represent cultural difference? In other words, if Said represents a positive outcome of Palestinian exile, why does the *Edward Said Mural* focus almost completely on Palestine? While this public art project gives agency and voice to a subaltern group, we must question whether it feeds into Bourriaud's supposition of "a

[224] Bourriaud, *Altermodern,* 20.

neurotic preoccupation with origins typical of the era of globalization."[225] While diasporic Palestinian-Americans occupy a site of transnational and/or multiple belonging, Palestinian cultural heritage remains a priority. Transnationalism in this instance is predicated on a direct link to a homeland, and an unbreakable connection to it. If the characterization of difference is utilized in order to migrate from dialogue concerning the periphery into the center, we must also question whether this project actually reconfirms the common understanding of the "other" as peripheral. While transnationalism may allow for a larger Palestinian voice in communities throughout the world, the continued insistence on a specific and unbending tie to Palestine and its cultural heritage limits rather than expands the ability for Palestinian-Americans to become part of the mainstream or wider public.[226]

In a letter addressing those present for the unveiling of the mural, GUPS wrote, "Our involvement with the General Union of Palestinian Students has greatly contributed to helping us understand our own identities as Arab-Americans, activists, and as part of the exiled Palestinian

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[225] Bourriaud, *Altermodern*, 20.

[226] Rasheed Araeen questions Said's use of his position as a Palestinian exile to gain a voice within the predominately masculine, Eurocentric, white system. "Edward Said's exile is a genuine exile, and his articulation of the experiences of this exile is part of the struggle of the Palestinian people. What is most significant here is that Said has used these experiences to look at the system which has caused this exile, and has then developed a profoundly critical position which exposes the inhumanity of the system," Araeen, Rasheed. "A New Beginning." *Third Text* 50 (Spring, 2000), 8-9. Said essentially illuminates his peripheral position to gain entry into the dominant institution. Araeen maintains, "The exiled subject, therefore does not operate from a position of loss or as a victim, but from a position from which he/she can locate him/herself in the world as a free subject and change it. Said therefore speaks not as a victim but from a position of power which he attains as a subject" (Araeen, 8-9). As a scholar focused on the "other," Said's position as the "other" allows him access to move easily along the border between the dominant and marginalized. Wang Ning writes of Said's unique scholarly position, able to move freely between the center and periphery, "As a high-ranking scholar in the West, he cannot help feeling proud of himself, especially qualified to deal with the Orient as an "other" which is unfamiliar to mainstream Western scholarship but with which he has countless ties," Wang Ning, "Orientalism versus Occidentalism?" *New Literary History* 28. (1997), 59. However, as Said's work has gained exuberant prominence, Araeen questions whether Said's individual and publicized experience of exile has become a prototype for the post-colonial other. He establishes a universal voice and provides a path for members of the periphery to gain global significance. Yet whether Said's post-colonial other has become a homogenized remains questionable. "What bothers me is that his [Said's] articulation of the experience of his own exile has not only been universalized, through its institutional appropriation, but has become a basis from which to look at the non-white immigrant in the West...The condition of exile is no longer a loss from which one necessarily suffers, but it is now used by many to elicit sympathy which in turn allows the ruling system to define and construct them as postcolonial Others," (Ning, 29).

Diaspora."[227] Perhaps the Palestinian Union chose Said as a figurehead as a celebration of cultural identity and a symbol of success for a specifically Palestinian audience, or perhaps Said stands as a symbol for the displaced, post-colonial other, a symbol in which all of those who live within the periphery can identify with and celebrate. But what *route* do the Palestinian-Americans take in order to be seen and heard on SFSU's campus and in the eyes of the wider public? Stuart Hall writes extensively on how outsider artists enter the modern system, and ultimately concludes that artists must present "identity cards" in order to make themselves and their work 'transparent'.[228] Very obviously presented as a cultural other, Said's Palestinian identity is transparent within the mural. The presumably 'non-other' members of the public, without knowledge of Said's accomplishments, can immediately recognize that he is a celebrated member of ethnic origins.

Although Palestinian-Americans maintain agency over their representation and voice in the public community of SFSU, the question of whether or not this one group is speaking for all other Palestinian-Americans raises another problem. To conceptualize this community as a homogenous diasporic group does not give due agency to Palestinian-Americans who do not identify so closely with Palestine. Gaytri Spivak's "How to Read a Culturally Different Book" attests to this envisioned homogeneity within an ethnic or cultural group as she questions the agency of subaltern groups in India. Contemporary scholar Neil Lazarus unravels Spivak's dilemma within a larger critique of postcolonial discourse.

> Spivak suggests that in arrogating to itself the authority to represent the aspirations of all Indian people and movements, Indian nationalism not only posits the concept of 'India' ideologically, as an 'imagined community' to which classes and groups of people in the society have equal access and to which they all share the same allegiance, but also serves to render 'subaltern' a variety of forms of self-understanding, social practice and struggle in the India-forms that do

[227] This excerpt was taken from the GUPS letter within the mural inauguration program.
[228] Araeen, 10.

> not articulate themselves in the language and syntax of national consciousness. It is for this reason, presumably, that Spivak bids us, as postcolonial intellectuals and/or theorists of (post)colonialism, to 'watch out' as keenly in the presence of nationalist discourse in the presence of imperialist discourse for the continuing construction of the subaltern. [229]

Another scholar involved within this discussion is Trinh Minhha who effectively problematizes the entire notion of "speaking" for the masses. While many groups form through a common mission or shared experience, be it an attempt for independence or visibility within mainstream society, Minhha maintains that speaking for the masses is ultimately an elitist gesture. Lazarus fleshes out the discrepancies of Minhha's arguments as "the very idea of speaking for others comes to be viewed as a discredited aspiration, and secretly authoritarian."[230] Kapur writes of the routes marginalized people and cultures can take in the emerging global culture, one of which includes "the reflexive option set up by each one of these intertwined possibilities which contribute to establishing a utopian realm of the other that is best reclaimed by that other."[231] I would argue that the *Edward Said Mural* is a performance of this route; however, rather than understanding the idea of "reclaiming the other by the other" as an unproblematic utopian practice, this reclamation in many instances can prove just as homogenizing as speaking for the other.

It is perhaps most significant, however, that transnational actors, who are oftentimes said to represent the new mobility of the globalized world, do not always represent a choice to be transnational. The transnationalism supported within the *Edward Said Mural* is specific to a cultural condition, and perhaps even more homogenizing than incorporative. Transnationalism in this case reinforces national boundaries across international distances. Emphasizing a more politically-driven definition, the term can be just as limiting as it can be expansive. The *Edward*

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[229] Lazarus, 208.
[230] Lazarus, 211.
[231] Kapur, 30.

Said Mural shows us that transnationalism is not synonymous with 'borderless' as cultural identity continues to maintain very tangible distinctions between ethnic groups.

However, the success of this project rests in the transparency of its development, the collaborative aspect included in the formation of the design, and the ultimate contention it activates in the communities that form in response to it. The outcome of the finalized mural becomes secondary to the process of its manifestation that creates a concerned and involved community. Making a seemingly cohesive public aware of its complete disunity breaks the surface of masked reality and allows the public to truly enter a site of honest exchange. Breaking through the layer of unity that appeared on SFSU's surface, the mural, originally intended as a cultural heritage project, uncovered a conflict surrounding identity.

Imagining a world of unity and democracy is much easier than imagining one composed of chaotic contention, but it is the projects that remind us that the world is not a utopic place that effectively express the reality of the world and instigate a social transformation among the artist, community, and audience. Experiences of suffering, displacement, and the consequences of globalization today must be made public in order for a change to occur. The transitory nature of many of these projects also protects who and what is being represented to avoid cultural commodification. The successful works are those that allow for responses to the needs of the subject and the community on an egalitarian level without giving something to the public that becomes a meaningless symbol of identity. While art might not be able to change the world singlehandedly, it will create a shift in the audience that views it and the community that forms from its exhibition if it is developed in a manner that expresses a reality with which people can interact.

V. Conclusion

Public art can be a means for letting the tensions of everyday interactions between the self and other, between public and private spheres, between real and virtual space, and between the global and the local play out in a process of exchange. New found strategies for approaching public art allow for transparent processes where the public and the initiating artist or organization collaborate together in a movement towards creating an egalitarian work space. In some cases, the public artist's sole responsibility is to provide a platform for the participating community to gain full access to the context, meaning, and future of the work. Closer to attaining a democratic approach to art than ever before, public artists are embracing the benefits of globalization by simultaneously resisting the negative consequences. While no one researched example of public art presents an example of a completely successful project, the movement towards expanding access, becoming completely sustainable, and providing unhindered platforms for intercultural and transnational exchange is illuminating the exciting potential of today's artists and projects.

Public art can act as a barometer for public opinions, needs, and desires and can initiate communities that provide beneficial services for local and global spaces; however, it can also be a dangerous tool for corporate financiers and first-world initiatives to maintain control over public space. While globalization increases the expansive potential of communities and access to these participatory structures, the spread of its mechanisms can threaten homogenization of individuals, communities, and nations. Successful contemporary public art projects working within the tension intrinsic to this globalizing system, avoiding the dilemma post-colonialists faced in trying to escape the system altogether. The fight against globalizing tendencies in these public projects makes one thing extremely certain: new borders and boundaries continue to form

as others dissipate. A borderless world is part of the utopian imagination, as even the homogenization of capitalistic consumers into one global culture draws a border between those who profit and those who buy and those who have access to this global culture and those who remain outside. A community always consists of a "we" as opposed to a "them," so we can never expect to erase the distinction of a self and other. Rather than trying to blur or erase the boundaries, public artists can surface the tension that resides underneath to allow for new relationships to form across those boundaries.

Rather than producing utopian models for existence, the successful public artists of today's world present models for existence that reference the reality of the world in which we live. Gaining touch with the reality of what forms of public space, democracy, and community are possible today, public artists can approach community-building and identity not as ways to fix the world, but instead as explorations of ways to coexist with one another and their natural and built surroundings. Artists do this by ultimately acknowledging, in the words of Rosalyn Deutsche that, "...conflict, far from the ruin of democratic public space, is the condition of its existence."[232] Initiating communities based on conflict, be they technological, ecological, and/or identity-based, and providing platforms for the community participants to form collective identities sustained through involvement with the project is what makes today's artists more successful than their new genre predecessors. It is not multiculturalism that is dead (as multiple European leaders claim)[233] but pointing to multiculturalism as the means for attaining an egalitarian twenty-first century society. Rather than celebrating diversity, public artists have found means to address the tensions that reside below the surface, as the effective artists are no longer looking for resolutions but focused more on intercultural exchange and interaction.

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[232] Deutsche, xiii.

[233] See discussion in the introduction, p. 1.

Works express the needs of people *now*, rather than using public art as a tool for 'righting the wrongs' of history or maintaining control over public space and meaning. Public artists have begun to address the needs of the present that local, regional, national, and international governments and global powers have failed to tackle.

In 1984 Lucy Lippard wrote, "Artists alone cannot change the world. Neither can anyone else, *alone*. But we can choose to be part of the world that is changing. There is no reason why visual art should not be able to reflect the social concerns of our day..."[234] In light of Lippard's statement, I contend that public art provides the necessary lens for responding to the changing world. Public art can initiate community-building practices that might start locally, but ultimately expand to reach even the most distant parts of the world. Successful projects can empower, instigate, anger, and change, and they can be just as dynamic as the public they are meant to represent and benefit. At a time when funds for the arts are dissolving at a pace that can essentially harm the growing potential of effective public art, we must reconsider, take note of, and provide a critical eye into evaluating what projects get funding. The projects that initiate communities, provide sustainable platforms for dialogue, and represent the reality of the people and circumstances of today are those that deserve financing.

[234] Lippard, "Trojan Horse," 344.

IMAGES:

Figure 1. Diego Rivera, *History of Mexico*, 1929-1930. Mural. Palacio Nacional, Mexico City, Distrito Federal. Available from ARTstor: © Scott Gilchrist, Archivision, Inc., http://www.artstor.org (accessed 12 Apr. 2010).

Figure 2. Springhill Avenue, 1987. IRA volunteers brandishing weapons. Mural. Reproduced in Bill Rolston, Politics and Painting: Murals and Conflict in Northern Ireland (London: Associated University Press, Inc., 1991).

Figure 3. Gullermo Aranda, Arturo Roman, Salvador Barrajas, Jose Cervantes, Sammy Llamas, Bebe Llamas, Victor Ochoa, Ernest Paul, Guillermo Rosete, Guilbert "Magu" Lujan, and M.E.Ch.A. group from U.C. Irvine *Historical Mural* on east side of *Toltecas en Aztlán,* 1973, renovated, 1988. Mural. Chicano Park, San Diego, California. © K. Robles, 1997, Reproduced in http://www.chicanoparksandiego.com/murals/history.html (accessed 20 Mar. 2011).

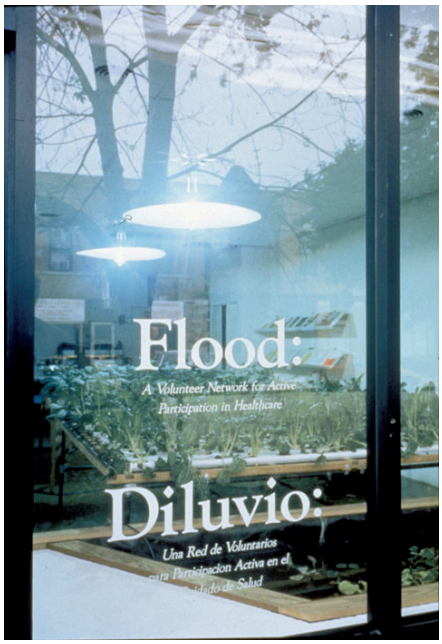

Figure 4. HAHA, *Flood: A Volunteer Network for Active Participation in Healthcare*, 1993. Chicago, Illinois. Reproduced in http://www.hahahaha.org/projFlood.html (accessed 17 Apr. 2011).

Figure 5. Judy Baca, *The Great Wall of Los Angeles*, detail, 1976-1983. Acrylic on concrete. 13.5' x one-half mile. Coldwareter Canyong Avenue between Burbank Blvd. and Oxnard St. Nan Nuys, California. Available from ARTstor: © SPARC/Eva Cockcroft. http://www.artstor.org (accessed 2 Apr. 2011).

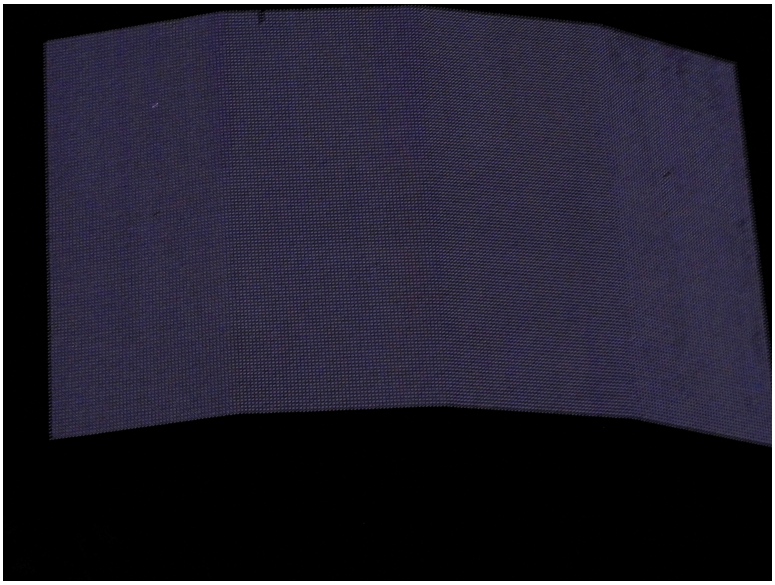

Figure 6. Antoine Schmidt, *City Sleep Lights*, 2010. Media Facade Festival, Berlin, Germany. Photograph by Lori Goldstein, August 30, 2010.

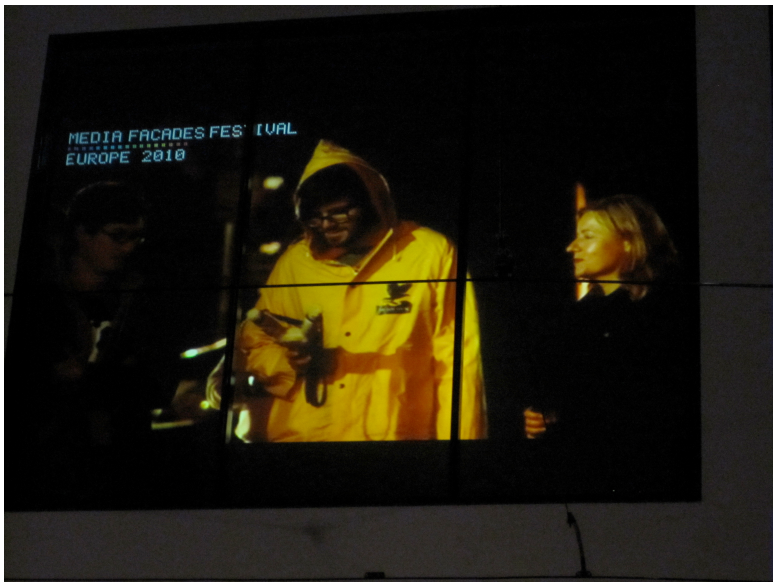

Figure 7. VR/Urban, *SMS Slingshot*, 2010. Media Facade Festival, Berlin, Germany. Photograph by Lori Goldstein, August 28, 2010.

Figure 8. VR/Urban, *SMS Slingshot*, 2010. Media Facade Festival, Berlin, Germany. Photograph by Lori Goldstein, August 28, 2010.

Figure 9. Raphael Lozano-Hemmer. *Pulse Park, Relational Architecture, 14*, 2008. Madison Square Park, New York City. Photo by James Ewig. Reproduced in http://www.lozanohemmer.com/showimage.php?img=new_york_2008 &proj=Pulse%20Park&id=15 (accessed 18 Apr. 2011).

Figure 10. Matthew West, *Veiled Presence,* 2010. Virtual enclosure. Liberty State Park, Jersey City, New Jersey. Reproduced in http://www.virtualpublicartproject.com/Virtual_Public_Art_Project/Exhibitions_Veiled_Presence.html (accessed 3 Apr. 2011).

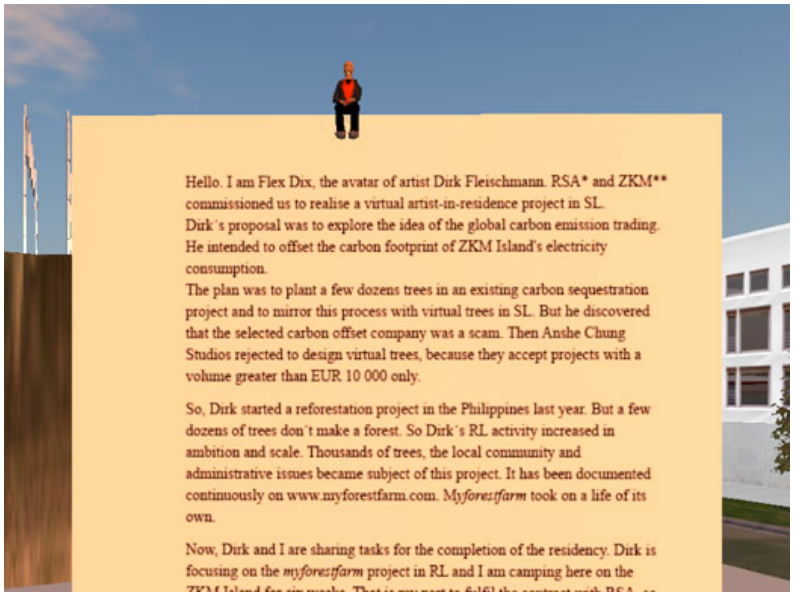

Figure 11. Dirk Fleishchmann, Image of Flex Dix on ZKM Island, 2008. Second Life. Reproduced in RSA Arts Ecology Blog, http://www.artsandecology.org.uk/projects/our-projects/dirk-fleischmann (accessed 3 Apr. 2011).

Figure 12. REBAR, *PARK(ing),* 2010. Public intervention. San Francisco, California. Photo by Andrea Scher and Jeff Conlon. Reproduced in http://www.rebargroup.org/projects/parking/# (accessed 18 Apr. 2011).

Figure 13. Raphael Lozano-Hemmer, *Vectorial Elevation, Relational Architecture, 4*, 2002. Vitoria-Gasteiz, Basque Country, Spain. Photo by: David Quintas. Reproduced in Raphael Lozano-Hemmer, "Vectorial Elevation, Relational Architecture, 4" http://www.lozano-hemmer.com/index.php (accessed 3 Apr. 2011).

Figure 14. Olympia-Rafah Solidarity Mural, 2010. Olympia,Washington. Mural and audio program. (Image taken from project website Audio Program Key.) Reproduced in http://olympiarafahmural.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/10/frontpanel-191.jpg (accessed 3 Apr. 2011).

Figure 15. Joseph Beuys, *Overcome Party Dictatorship Now*, 1971. Düsseldorf, Germany © DACS 2009. Reproduced in *Joseph Beuys* http://www.tate.org.uk (accessed 3 Apr. 2011).

Figure 16. Joseph Beuys, *7,000 Eichen* (7,000 Oaks), 1982. Documenta VII. Kassel, Germany. Reproduced in *Kassel un die Region* http://www.kassel.de//stadt/geschichte/jubilaeumsdaten/06925/index.html (accessed 18 Apr. 2011).

Figure 17. Lee Simmons, *Quarry: 2*, Surrey, England, 2006. © Sue Roche. 2006. Reproduced in "Quarry: 2," http://www.publicartonline.org.uk/casestudies/temporary/quarry2/images.php (accessed 3 Apr. 2011).

Figure 18. Agnes Denes, *Tree Mountain-A Living Time Capsule-11,000 Trees, 11,000,* 1992-1996. © Contemporary Museum. Reproduced in http://www.contemporary.org/art_explorer.html (accessed 3 Apr. 2011).

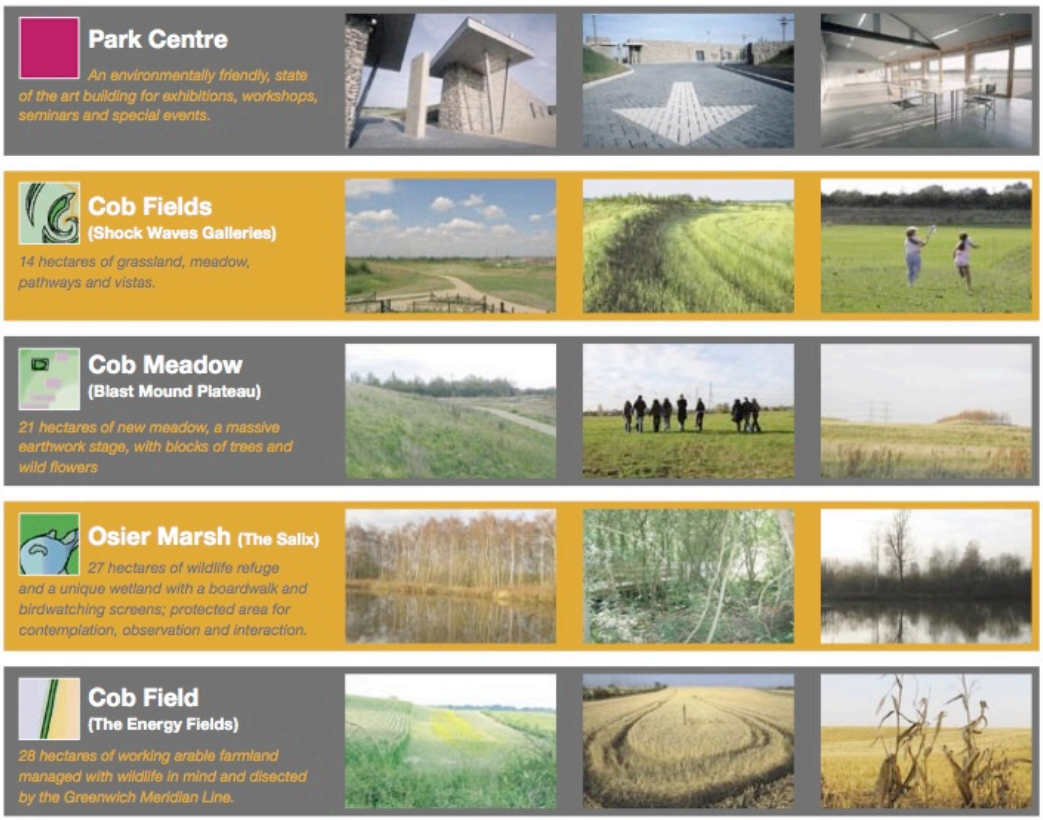

Figure 19. Page 3 of Gunpowder Park leaflet, 2004. Lee Valley Park. Reproduced in http://www.leevalleypark.org.uk/en/content/cms/leisure/nature_reserves/gunpowder_park/gunpowder_park.aspx (accessed 3 Apr. 2011).

Figure 20. Krishnaraj Chonat, *Crane + Tree,* 2010. 48 Degrees Celcius, New Delhi, India. Reproduced in *48 Degrees Celcius*, http://www.48c.org/krishna.html (accessed 3 Apr. 2011).

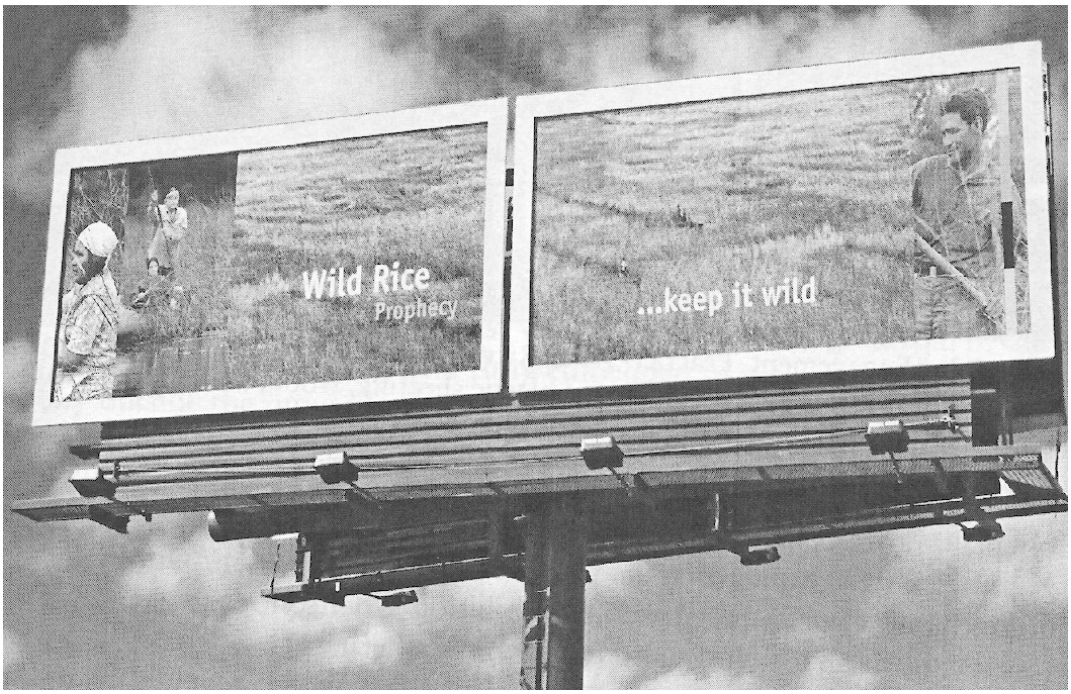

Figure 21. Karl Lorenz, *Keep It Wild*, September 2006 to January 2007. Billboard. 12' x 60'. Detroit Lakes, Minnesota. Credit: Karl Lorenz. Reproduced in *The Practice of Public Art*, Edited by Cameron Cartiere and Shelley Willis (New York: Routledge, 2008), 60.

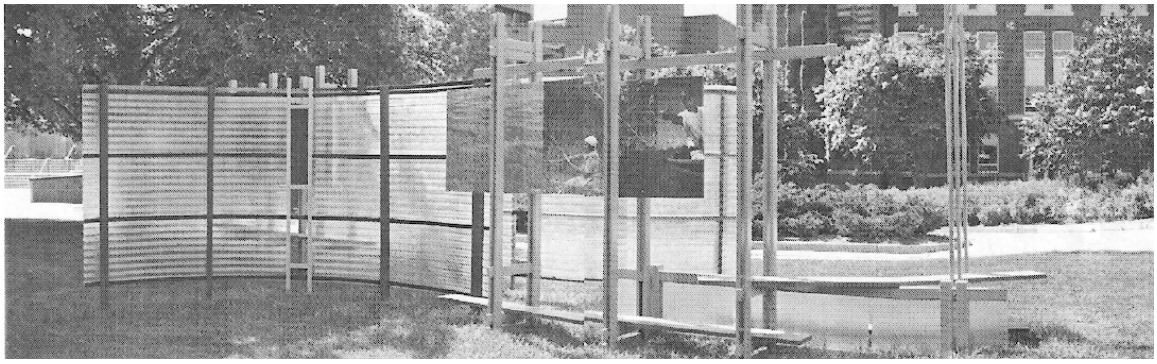

Figure 22. Karl Lorenz, "Engagement Practice/Wild Rice," 2005-2007. Mixed media (steel, semitranslucent corrugated plastic sheeting, wood, and printed images). 8' x 18' x 37'. St. Paul, Minnesota. Credit: Karl Lorenz. Reproduced in *The Practice of Public Art*, Edited by Cameron Cartiere and Shelley Willis (New York: Routledge, 2008), 61.

Figure 23. Thomas Hirschhorn, *Bataille Monument*, 2002. Kassel, Germany. Available from ARTstor: http://www.artstor.org (accessed 17 Apr. 2011).

Figure 24. Thomas Hirschhorn, Bataille Monument, Kassel, Germany, 2002. Available from ARTstor: http://www.artstor.org (accessed 17 Apr. 2011).

Figure 25. Gianmaria Conti, *The Memory Box on the Green Line,* 2006. Nicosia. © aMaze Cultural Lab. Reproduced in http://www.amaze.it/eng/gallery/v/goingpublic06/Nicosia/07MeBoxSaray.JPG.html?g2_0=gallery (accessed 3 Apr. 2011).

Figure 26. Marjetica Potrč, *House for Travellers*, 2003. Building materials. Manifesta 3, Ljubljana, Slovenia. Courtesy of the artist. Reproduced in http://www.Potrč.org/project2.htm, accessed 3 Apr. 2011).

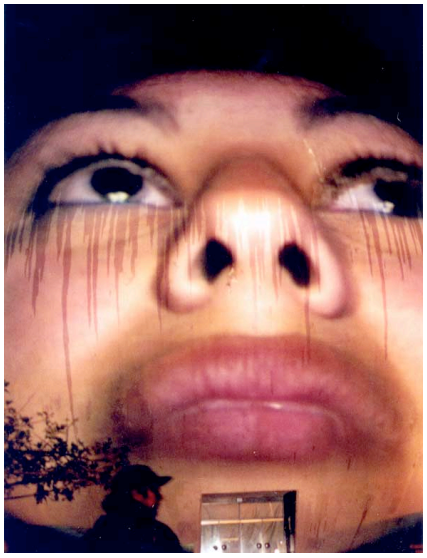

Figure 27. Krzysztof Wodiczko, *The Tijuana Projection*, 2001. Public projection. Centro Cultural de Tijuana, Mexico (as part of In-Site 2000). © Krzysztof Wodiczko/Galerie Lelong, New York. Reproduced in "Krzysztof Wodiczko," *Art:21* http://www.pbs.org/art21/slideshow/?slide=719&artindex=159 (accessed 3 Apr. 2011).

Figure 28. Krzysztof Wodiczko, *Alien Staff*. Photograph. 1992. Barcelona, Spain. Exhibited at Galerie Lelong, 1996. Available from ARTstor: © Larry Qualls Archive. http://www.artstor.org (accessed 3 Apr. 2011).

Figure 29. Jaume Plensa, *Crown Fountain,* 2004. Glass blocks, steel, fountain elements, digital video projections, and black granite pool. Millennium Park, Chicago, Illinois. Available from ARTstor: © Minneapolis School of Art and Design. http://www.artstor.org (accessed 3 Apr. 2011).

Figure 30. *Reclaim the Streets*, 1995. Public demonstration. London, England. Available from ARTstor: © Stuart Phillips/Magnum Photos. http://www.artstor.org (accessed 3 Apr. 2011).

Figure 31. *Palestinian Cultural Mural Honoring Dr. Edward Said*, 2007. Acrylic. Cesar Chavez Student Center, San Francisco State University. © Fayeq Oweis 2011. Reproduced in http://www.oweis.com/said.html (accessed 12 Mar. 2011).

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